THEODORA.

THEODORA;

OR,

THE SPANISH DAUGHTER:

A

TRAGEDY.

DEDICATED (BY PERMISSION)

TO

HER GRACE

GEORGIANA,

DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

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PROLOGUE.

Enter a PILGRIM.

TREMBLING and weary; at my journey's end
How ſhall I beſt my meſſage recommend?
Pilgrims (a pious ſet) in days of yore,
Travell'd ſome ſaint or relique to adore,
Mine is a different errand. I am told
Simply the Muſes wiſhes to unfold.
Excuſe my figure, Ladies! well I know
This ſpeech would prove more pleaſing from a Beau:
Beaux are not clad like me, in ruſſet gown,
Their dreſs is faſhion'd to enchant the town.
This difference alſo in our mode appears,
I owe no taylor's bill——as they do their's.
Nor daſhing buck am I, nor jovial ſoul,
I ſhake no dice-box, and I drain no bowl;
Ne'er on the turf have I my fortune try'd,
Nor in high Phaeton am wont to ride.

But

But tho' I muſt not be ſo bold to vie
With men of Tôn, who pleaſe the female eye,
Tho' I can ne'er expect a lady's praiſe,
Yet for the Muſe I dare ſolicit bays.

Encouraged firſt by HER, in whom is join'd
Genius without parade, and taſte refin'd,
Whoſe temper gay, benevolent, ſerene,
Suits with her lovely face, and graceful mien,
Whoſe rare endowments, and whoſe charms are known
To half the world; The Muſe preſumptuous grown,
Looks for indulgence from the female race,
Nor fears a critic, in a ſmiling face,
But hopes in many of your ſex to find
Hearts like *GEORGIANA's*—amiable and kind.
But if you diſapprove my gothic gown
Oh deign ye Fair! to make your pleaſure known.
At your command I'll doff the uncouth array,
And change my mode of dreſſing every day;
This is a compliment you muſt allow,
And more than any powder'd Fop will do,
For who their perſons wou'd ſo much degrade
To lay aſide the gorget and cockade?
The buckle * which the foot can ſcarce ſuſtain?
Enormous club—or faſhionable cane?

* This ſtyle of dreſs was beginning to be adopted ſeveral years ago, when the Prologue was written.

The three-fold waiſtcoat to augment the ſhape?
The monſtrous whiſker, and the upſtart cape?
Stripp'd of the modiſh ornaments they boaſt,
Their claim to notice wou'd perhaps be loſt;
To Faſhion, or to Whim, they owe ſucceſs,
Their aim is conqueſt, and their forte is dreſs,
Their vows are like balloons, they make you ſtare;
For tho' inflammable, they end in air.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON GUZMAN DE SILVA.	
DON GARCIA DE BENEVARES,	Guzman's Creditor.
SELIM, - - - - - - - -	The Dey of Tunis.
ALPHONSO, - - - - - - -	Theodora's Lover.
ANTONIO, - - - - - - -	Friend to Alphonſo.
CARLOS, - - - - - - -	Steward to Don Guzman.
FERNANDEZ, - - - - - -	Garcia's Confidant.
PEDRO, - - - - - - -	A Phyſician.
LISARDO, - - - - - - -	A Meſſenger.
THEODORA, - - - - - -	Don Guzman's Daughter.
ELVIRA, - - - - - - - -	Theodora's Confidant.
INIS, - - - - - - - -	An Attendant.

SCENE, principally in SPAIN.

THEODORA:

A

TRAGEDY.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in* Don Guzman's *Country Seat.—Thunder and Lightning.*

Elvira *and* Inis.

ELVIRA.

IMMORTAL Powers preſerve me!—till this hour
Ne'er have I ſeen ſuch forked lightnings play,
Or heard ſuch thunder.

INIS.

'Tis indeed tremendous.
I wonder wherefore, in this awful ſtorm,
Our lady ſtays alone; neglects the aid
Of ſocial intercourſe, and ſhuns our ſight:
Say wherefore ſince this morning does ſhe ſtay,
Within her room, in ſolitary ſadneſs?

ELVIRA.

The ſun has not his annual journey ran,
Since thou, beneath the hoſpitable roof

Of Guzman, haſt reſided: Long have I
Attended Theodora—long obſerv'd
The tenor of her conduct; mark'd her grief,
And often wonder'd whence it 'roſe: each year,
On this returning day, ſhe ſhuns the beams
Of the bright ſun—flies from ſociety,
And for ſome ſecret cauſe, unknown to all,
(Save her fair breaſt, and the celeſtial powers,)
Devotes herſelf, to privacy, and mourning.

INIS.

'Tis ſtrange, a lady, beautiful and young,
Ador'd (as fame reports,) by noblemen
Of great diſtinction in the court of Spain,
Shou'd ſcorn the homage of her numerous ſlaves,
Nor fix on one among the rival throng.

ELVIRA.

More ſtrange it is, becauſe her noble father,
(Whom tenderly ſhe loves,) is deep involv'd
In debts, originating from misfortunes,
Which in the ſpace of a few fleeting years,
Have crowded on him: tho' he wears the maſk
Of cheerfulneſs, I greatly fear his heart
Is not at eaſe; he ſtruggles to preſerve
The ancient ſtate, for which the houſe of Silva
Has thro' ſo many centuries been famed;
And labours to conceal decaying fortune.
The time will come, when this illuſtrious man
Muſt yield to his diſtreſs, when he muſt fall
A victim to adverſity;——his debt
To haughty Garcia, he had bound himſelf
To pay, this very day; for which intent,
He had reſolved to ſell the princely manſion,
Wherein ſo many of his anceſtors
Had in Madrid maintain'd their dignity.

It was the only means he had, to pay
The mighty debt. (For *this* eſtate belongs,
At his deceaſe, to Don Antonio
His couſin german.) Lo! a fire deſtroy'd
The coſtly fabrick: that concluſive blow
I deem the ſeal of Guzman's ruin.—This
I learn from Carlos, who has ſerv'd him long,
(A faithful ſteward) with reſpect and zeal.——
Hark how the tempeſt riſes! Inis, come,
Let us retire to ſome ſecurer place:
Methinks the tumult of the ſkies portends
Something eventful.—Yet a louder peal
Of thunder rolls.

INIS.

Behold our lady comes,
Immers'd in ſorrow.

THEODORA.

Oh ye ſacred Powers!
Who rule the thunder, and direct the ſtorm,
Is not the conflict in this wretched heart
More furious than the elemental ſtrife?
Oh day! for ever dreadful to my ſoul!
Oh day moſt ſad! which to my memory brings
Ten thouſand wild ideas—thou art paſs'd.
Reſt then my ſoul, and yet awhile ſuſtain
Thoſe ills, which grief can never, never, cure.
Go, Inis, ſeek my father; let him know
I mean to pay my duty at his feet.
I will but caſt aſide theſe looks of woe,
And then implore his bleſſing, ere I ſleep. [*Exit* Inis.

ELVIRA.

Madam, this morning, as I chanc'd to ſtray
Within the foreſt, I perceiv'd a path
Unknown to me; it ſeems, as Nature meant

Thither to court the ſteps of travellers,
And fix them, by enchantment, to the ſpot:
The walk is ſhaded by ſome ſtately trees,
Whoſe branches, interwoven o'er the head,
Form perfect arches, and exclude the rays
Of the meridian ſun. Upon the ground,
Flowers of unnumber'd tints ſo plenteous grow,
They make a bed of fragrance. If the ſtorm
Is follow'd by a cloudleſs ſky to-morrow,
I pray thee let me to thy ſight reveal
This chearful ſcene.——
(Aſide) I wiſh I could divert
The melancholy temper of her mind.

THEODORA.

I ſee, dear maid, thou ever art diſpos'd
To take occaſion, from the ſlighteſt means,
To diſſipate the gloom which rules my thoughts.
Each day thou doſt contrive ſome ſcheme, whereby
I for a moment, may forget my ſorrows.
I thank thee for thy care: I will repay
Thy kind attention, by my confidence,
And grateful love. Together we will go
To this ſequeſter'd ſpot, where I will tell
The ſtory of my woes. Deep in thy breaſt
Receive a ſecret, ne'er to be divulg'd.
Oh! I have much to ſay.——But let us hence.
I muſt attend my ſire; affect to look *(aſide)*
At leaſt, ſerene; and in my pious cares,
Awhile forget the image of Alphonſo. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.—*A magnificent Apartment in* Benevares *Caſtle.*—Don Garcia *writing at a Table*; Fernandez *ſtanding by him.*

Enter Liſardo, *with Letters in his Hand.*

GARCIA.

Whence comeſt thou, Liſardo?

LISARDO.

From Madrid:
Charg'd ſir, with letters from your ſteward there,
Who bade me, on the inſtant, bring them hither.

GARCIA (*riſing*).

I gueſs they are petitions to my patience,
Sent by that hoary debtor, Guzman.

[Liſardo *delivers the Letters, and retires.*]

GARCIA (*to* Fernandez).

Know,
I do abhor his very name; his pride,
His upright character (which even ſcorns
Adverſity, and towers above misfortune.)
I wiſh to humble him, and make him tread
The beaten paths which common men purſue:
I long have ſicken'd at his fame, have loath'd
A praiſe, ſo ill according with my own;
And oft lamented, my ſhort-ſighted ſire,
(Won by the ſemblance of his many virtues)
Was tempted to entruſt him with the loan
Of ſuch a ſum. I hate the houſe of Guzman:
The haughty-minded Don has not yet learn'd
To bow with ſupple knee to fortune; ne'er
Has ſought to pay me homage; to reſpect

My ſtate ſuperior: but becauſe his houſe
(His beggar'd houſe) can boaſt of anceſtry
Ennobled more than mine, with pride elate,
He plumes himſelf on greatneſs! Let us ſee (*Opening*
What he preſumes to write; my greedy ſoul *the Letter.*)
Anticipates revenge; exulting ſees
An hour of retribution, juſtly due,
For all his former arrogance and pride. (*Reads.*)

FERNANDEZ.

He now muſt learn to cringe, and aſk for bread.
Pride ſhould be humbled; and his turn is come,
To cry for pity from thoſe very men
Whom he, perhaps, not many years ago
Inſulted, by pre-eminence and ſtate.

GARCIA.

This feeds my rancour. Here, he owns diſtreſs,
But rather challenges, than claims compaſſion:
He aſks me to be patient, and appeals
To generoſity alone. He ſcorns
To pray for lenity. Fernandez! now
The time arrives, when, in a ſuppliant tone,
He ſhall implore me to be merciful;
And learn, that pride can little means ſupply
Tow'rds life and ſuſtenance. I will away
This evening to Madrid, and give my orders
Reſpecting this inflexible old man.
His fate depends on me; nor ſhall he find,
That like my ſire, I can unthank'd, reſign
The privilege to claim my rightful debt. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE III.—*A Grove.*—Theodora *and* Elvira *ſitting on a Bank.*

THEODORA.

Six tedious years of wretchedneſs are paſs'd
Since I have kept the ſtory of my woes
Within the bounds of ſilence. Now, alas!
They riſe ſuperior to reſtraint.—Elvira!
Sure I may truſt thee?—Yes! I will not doubt.

ELVIRA.

What means my noble lady? after years
Of ſtrong attachment, of approv'd obedience,
Does ſhe yet heſitate? yet fear to truſt
Her ſecret to Elvira's faithful boſom?
Believe my ſpeech ſincere, when I aſſure thee,
I oft with wonder, with reſpect, and awe,
Have mark'd the inward conflict of thy mind;
Have ſeen the magnanimity of ſoul
With which thou haſt repreſs'd the riſing tear;
And tho' a wound was rankling in thy heart,
Conceal'd the arrow, which had caus'd the pain.

THEODORA.

When no emollient can be found, but that
Which feeble pity yields, we are content
Rather unſeen to weep, unheard to ſigh,
Than bid a ſympathetic mind partake
The nature of our grief.—
Yet I will tell thee all!—I muſt relieve
This heart, that almoſt breaks beneath the weight
Of pangs accumulated, and entruſt

Thy honour with my ſtory—let it ſink
Deep in thy breaſt, and warn thee to avoid
The flower-enamel'd paths that lead to love.

ELVIRA.

Yes, in my boſom ſhall the ſecret lay,
And never paſs theſe lips. The ſilent grave
Shall, with Elvira's laſt remains, receive
What Theodora may impart.

THEODORA.

Dear maid! (*riſing*)
I cannot doubt thee—thy unerring ſoul
Is form'd for truth and honour. I have much,
My gentle friend! to tell thee. All my life
Has been a chain of unexpected woes,
Where every link receiv'd augmented power,
To bind me faſt to ſorrow and deſpair.——
Soon as my infant mind firſt knew the dawn
Of ſenſibility, I learn'd to love
The young, the brave Alphonſo; he was form'd
To pleaſe the eye, and to engage the heart.
Senſe, elegance, and ſoftneſs, grac'd his ſpeech,
Valour, and wiſdom, dignify'd his name.
Yet fortune frown'd upon his noble birth,
And tho' the ſecond brother of an houſe
Of equal luſtre with our own, he ſhared
A ſcanty portion of his father's wealth:
His haughty brother, arrogant Rimenes!
Had, by his vicious habits, much diſpleas'd
My ſire (who was their guardian). He diſcover'd
My growing paſſion for the young Alphonſo,
(Ere I believ'd he even could ſuſpect it:)
And diſapproving an alliance, where
Ambition, intereſt, and pride, oppos'd

The

The union, in an evil hour enjoin'd me
To bind myſelf, by a moſt ſolemn oath,
Never to give my hand unto Alphonſo.

ELVIRA.

Oh cruel! ſure this action is a ſtain
Upon the honour of Don Guzman.

THEODORA.

Heaven!
How many unavailing ſighs and tears
Succeeded to my fatal promiſe. Long
I combated with love, and vainly ſtrove
(Oppoſing duty to a rebel heart)
To ſhun the man whom I adored. Alas!
Tyrannic honour had preſcribed ſuch terms
As nature could not grant: my conſtant heart,
To the firſt object of its choice attach'd,
Was his, by all the ties of pure affection.
I promis'd not to wed with my Alphonſo,
But could not promiſe I wou'd ceaſe to love him.
I met him often—I renew'd, with tears
My hopeleſs vows of ever-during love:
A thouſand tender ſtratagems he uſed
To ſee me. Oft beneath an aged oak,
Hid from my father's manſion, have we ſat,
Forgetful of the hours, the world, the pomp
Of ſublunary greatneſs. In ourſelves
Supremely bleſt, we look'd not to the future,
Nor ſaw the ſtorm impending o'er our heads,
A ſtorm that gather'd to effect our ruin.
Our actions, innocence and honour, ſway'd;
Yet Guzman deem'd Platonic love a crime;
Watch'd our ſtol'n meetings with a jealous eye,
And nouriſh'd fierce reſentment in his breaſt. (*Weeps.*)

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.

Misjudging man! with a parental eye
No doubt, to higher proſpects he aſpir'd
For Theodora: deem'd her worth, her charms
Deſign'd to raiſe the ſplendour of his houſe
Almoſt to royalty. He thought, perhaps,
Honours and dignities had power to give
Felicity; and to exterior ſhew
Alone pretending, had forgot that love
Shou'd ſanctify the vows of nuptial faith.

THEODORA.

He kept me from my dear Alphonſo's ſight,
And interdicted me from ever more
Renewing interviews he diſapprov'd.
Meantime, Rimenes quarrel'd with Alphonſo;
And by deſpair, th' ill-fated youth was led
To riſque his life and fortunes on the ſea.
By merchandize he thought in time, to gain
Addition to his fortune; and, aſſur'd
Of my fidelity, he cheriſh'd hopes,
That in a future hour we might be able
To change my father's cruel reſolution.
Guzman allow'd me to behold him once
Before he left the coaſt of Spain. Alas!
I will not dwell upon that interview:
A thouſand vows of everlaſting truth,
A thouſand promiſes of conſtancy,
A thouſand tears and ſighs, we then exchang'd!
It is impoſſible for words to tell
Alphonſo's ſorrows, and my agonies:
I vow'd, if fate bereaved me of my love,
Never to yield my hand unto another,
But to be wedded to his memory.——

We parted, never to be bleſt again;
Never to meet on this ſide heaven—For ſoon
A dreadful ſtorm enſued, and from that hour
No tidings of his veſſel ere arrived!

ELVIRA.

Oh, hapleſs Theodora! thou, ſuppos'd
By all the world to be deſign'd for bliſs,
To form no wiſh that was not to be granted,
Admir'd, eſteem'd, and idoliz'd; careſs'd
By all thy friends; woo'd by the proud grandees
Of Spain, and envy'd by the female ſex,
The only daughter of a noble houſe,
Endow'd with fortune, beautiful, and young,
Who would have credited the tongue that durſt
Pronounce thee wretched? Yet a ſecret grief
Has like a worm conceal'd within a roſe,
Gnaw'd at thy heart, and fed upon thy bloom.

THEODORA.

Six years are paſs'd ſince my Alphonſo left me.
Six years of langour and perpetual ſorrow!
Guzman, relenting from his cruelty,
When he perceiv'd me wedded unto grief,
Try'd to atone for rigour that was paſs'd:
Gave me the liberty to mourn my lover,
And to refuſe the offers that were made me.
He fondly thought that time would weaken love:
Vainly he thought ſo; Theodora's heart
Cou'd love but *once*; yet when that *once* arriv'd,
The ſhaft of true affection pierced ſo deep
Into my breaſt, that it reſiſts the ſcythe
Of time, and never can the wound of grief
Be heal'd till death. On each returning year,
The day when my Alphonſo left his country,
I dedicate to mourning. Yeſterday . . . .

Enter

Enter Carlos, *haſtily.*

CARLOS.

Alas! Alas! my lady ....

THEODORA.

What wouldſt thou ſay?

CARLOS.

Oh! I have ſought, dear lady!
Some hours to find you. Little do you know
What cares await you at my maſter's houſe.

THEODORA.

What means thy ſpeech?—this myſtery unfold;
I am prepar'd to hear the worſt that fate
Can deal to Theodora.

CARLOS.

My good old maſter! ....
Madam, I cannot ſpeak—my heart is full:
Oh! let my tears interpret for me.

THEODORA.

How!
Is then my father dead?

CARLOS.

Far better, lady,
Wou'd be the fate of Guzman, if repos'd
Within the ſepulchre which has entomb'd
The aſhes of his great progenitors,
He loſt the ſenſe of miſery and ſhame. (*Pauſes.*)

THEODORA.

Oh, Carlos! ſpeak.

ELVIRA.

Dear madam! be compos'd.

CARLOS.

Thoſe cruel hounds,
The miniſters of Garcia's curs'd deſigns,
Can find no other prey to ſport upon,
And hunt to death, but thy illuſtrious ſire.
With ſacrilegious fury they have ſeiz'd
Upon his perſon; loaded him with bonds;
And, like a criminal, towards Madrid
Conduct him; ſentenc'd, by imperious Garcia,
To be impriſon'd till his debt is paid.

THEODORA.

Oh! mercileſs, inhuman man!—Good Carlos,
I charge thee, with my jewels to repair
To haughty Garcia; pray him to accept
Whatever little wealth is mine to give,
If it will mitigate my father's doom.
I do expect my couſin, Don Antonio,
Ere many moons are paſs'd—I dare believe,
In all the great abundance of his wealth,
And greater liberality of ſoul,
He will not let the guardian of his youth
Yield his laſt breath within a priſon's walls.

ELVIRA.

Madam, I pray you reſt upon my arm.

THEODORA.

Oh! I am ſick at heart—this laſt ſad ſhock
Humbles me to the duſt. For Guzman's ſake
I long have ſtruggled with my miſeries,
And from the duty which I owed a father
Have ſilently ſubmitted to my fate.
Of him bereav'd, what more have I to do
With this vain world? To die, and be at reſt,
Is all I have to wiſh. My wretched life

Has

Has been diſturb'd by anguiſh, care, and ſtrife.
A long oblivion to my woes I want,
Which nothing but the hand of death can grant.
Come then, ye ſeraphs from the realms above,
My willing ſpirit from its ſeat remove;
And when it leaves this tenement of clay,
May mercy an extended wing diſplay
My errors and my weakneſſes to ſhroud,
And pardon faults that nature has allow'd.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Garden belonging to the* Dey of Tunis.—
Antonio *and* Alphonſo *(in a Mooriſh Dreſs).*

ALPHONSO.

MOST generous Antonio! how can words
Expreſs the feelings of my grateful heart?
To owe my ranſom to a friend, whom ne'er
I thought to meet in Tunis, ſeems ſo ſtrange,
My wond'ring ſoul can hardly be perſuaded
To think it true.

ANTONIO.

Before I came from Spain,
Through friends in power, I fortunately gain'd
Letters of commendation to the courts
I meant to viſit. My inquiſitive,
And reſtleſs ſpirit, led me to explore
Countries remote and various. I obtain'd,
Among the reſt, one to the Dey of Tunis,
Thy patron Selim. When I hither came,
And ſaw thee (whom we long had reckon'd dead,
Among the number of his ſlaves) oh, Heaven!
With what aſtoniſhment, what joy, I found
An opportunity preſent itſelf,
Whereby I might aſſiſt thee: it appear'd
As tho' the hand of Heaven conducted me
To be its inſtrument in thy releaſe.
Since unto Selim I have paid thy ranſom,
I've nothing more to do but to conduct
My dear Alphonſo to his native land.

ALPHONSO.

ALPHONSO.

How can I e'er repay ſuch wond'rous goodneſs?

ANTONIO.

Talk not of payment. To a generous mind,
The act, by which we can oblige a friend,
Becomes its own reward. By Heaven! the joy
That ſparkles in thine eye, is recompence
Sufficient for Antonio.

ALPHONSO.

Oh, my friend!
So many years have paſs'd ſince I have liv'd,
Moſt wretched in my ignorance how fate
Had dealt with thoſe I lov'd, I dare not hope
That happineſs is ſtill reſerv'd for me.
My Theodora . . . . .

ANTONIO.

When I left Madrid,
Attach'd to her Alphonſo's memory,
Rejected ev'ry offer of alliance;
And with a noble conſtancy, profeſs'd
To me and Guzman, her intention fix'd
To lead a life of lonelineſs for thee.
A thouſand ſuitors have ador'd her charms,
And wonder'd at her obſtinate reſolve,
(Unknowing what a cauſe in ſecret ruled
That firm deſign). For Guzman's ſake alone
She bore ſociety; and vow'd, if e'er
The fates deprived her of her ſire, to hide
Her lovely perſon in a convent's walls,
Where ſhe might mourn the remnant of her days.

ALPHONSO.

Oh, matchleſs woman!

ANTONIO.

We believ'd thee loſt.
No tidings of thy veſſel e'er arriv'd
In Spain—the knowledge of a dreadful ſtorm
Contributed to make us mourn Alphonſo,
As one we never ſhou'd behold again.
The grief of Theodora was beyond
What language can deſcribe: at firſt 'twas loud,
Wild, and impetuous; but time at length,
With meliorating hand, allay'd the ſtorm,
Yet left the poiſon of perpetual ſorrow
To work in ſecret at her gentle heart,
Embitter life, and rob her of repoſe.
Since I have been in Tunis, I receiv'd
Letters, which tell me of Don Guzman's loſſes.
When I return, with zeal I will aſſuage
His cares; and ſhou'd he ever want a friend,
To raiſe his fortune, or ſupport his ſtate,
From my abundance gladly I'll reſign
A moiety, to ſave him from diſtreſs.

ALPHONSO.

Alas, Antonio! rigid ſervitude
Admits of no indulgence. I have long'd,
(But long'd in vain) to write, to eaſe the ſorrows
Of Theodora, and inform my brother
I ſtill exiſted.

ANTONIO.

That obdurate brother
Died ere I left Madrid; and by his death,
Soon as thou ſhalt return, his wealth is thine.

ALPHONSO.

Then have the fates afforded me the means,
In ſome degree, to pay the debt I owe thee—
They give me the pretence to claim the hand

Of Theodora. Fortunate Alphonſo!
In this one day thy fetters are exchang'd
For hopes of happineſs.—To thee, my friend,
This happineſs I owe. The haughty Selim
Was by the letters of thy friend in Spain,
Prepar'd to do thee honour, and to grant
Whate'er thou ſhou'd'ſt requeſt. My liberty,
I know he proudly wou'd refuſe to give,
For the mere value of a ranſom.—He
Is happy to oblige thee, and thy worth
Has been the means of my advantage.

Enter SELIM.

(*Speaks to* Alphonſo.) Hamed!

ALPHONSO.

Thus on my knee allow me to declare
My ſenſe of gratitude.

SELIM.

Then turn to him, (*pointing to* Antonio)
The author of thy freedom!

ANTONIO.

Generous Selim!
My thanks are not leſs warm than his. I feel
The obligation weighty at my heart,
And ſtruggling for expreſſion. In my friend,
You give me what I value more than all
The wealth, and boaſted diamonds, of the eaſt.
I ſee Alphonſo caſt aſide the name
Of Hamed with his bonds—I ſee him giv'n
To friendſhip, honour, happineſs, and Spain—
I ſee his patience meet with a reward.
Before we leave you Sir, I have a tale
To tell you of my friend, which he has kept
Like his true name, conceal'd within his breaſt

So

So many years.—Your pity I beſpeak,
For ſure I am, your noble ſoul will melt
At the recital of his ſtrange misfortunes—
You will rejoice the object of your favour
Is ſo deſerving of it.

SELIM.

Since I find
Thou doſt prepare ſo ſoon to ſail from Tunis,
I do requeſt thy preſence, with Alphonſo,
This night, in my pavillion.—I will break
For once, thro' bounds by Mooriſh laws preſcribed,
And for thy entertainment will exhibit
A ſcene of eaſtern luxury and ſhew,
Where beauty (ſacred to all other eyes
Save thoſe I licenſe) ſhall enchant thy view,
And mirth and harmony delight thine ear.

Enter a Slave.

SLAVE.

My lord, the banquet is prepared.

SELIM.

I come.—
Attend my ſteps. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Pavillion in the Garden.*—*Enter* Selim, Antonio, *and* Alphonſo.—*A Proceſſion of Mutes, Eunuchs, Women with Lutes, and Dancers.*—*They ſing to the principal Sultana, who walks under a Canopy, ſupported by Black Eunuchs, magnificently dreſſed.*

Song.

Heavenly Roxalana, hail!
Thrice welcome to theſe palmy groves;
For thee the roſe perfumes the gale,
And Venus ſends a train of loves.
To match with muſic Echo feigns,
And faintly whiſpers o'er the plains.
Chorus. To match with muſic, &c.

For thee the birds delight to ſing,
The muſes ſtrike Aonian lyres;
They haſten from Caſtalia's ſpring,
Thy name their votive ſtrain inſpires.
Oh come! their labours deign to crown,
Smile, and the world thy praiſe ſhall own.
Chorus. Oh come! their labours deign to crown,
Smile, and the world thy praiſe ſhall own.

(*She ſits in the pavillion, where there is a collation, with* Selim, Alphonſo, *and* Antonio.)

The Slaves form a Dance; ſome of them playing on the Tambour de Baſque.

SCENE

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in* Guzman's *Houſe.*

Elvira *and* Inis.

ELVIRA.

I wonder Carlos is not yet return'd;
Suſpenſe is dreadful to the anxious mind
Of Theodora. She deſponds, and droops
Beneath accumulated griefs; each hour
Her apprehenſions for Don Guzman's life
Augment: in ſilence ſhe expects the worſt,
And is reſolv'd, if Garcia ſtill detains
Her father in captivity, to try
What rhetoric her piety can teach,
And condeſcend, upon her bended knee,
To aſk for lenity from him ſhe hates;
From him, whoſe character ſhe muſt deſpiſe.
Whate'er may be her lot, I have obtain'd
Permiſſion ſtill to wait upon her perſon,
And ſhare her fortunes; happy if my care,
My zeal to ſerve her, can alleviate
The woes ſhe muſt endure. The veil of night
Begins to caſt a duſky gloom around,
Enveloping the globe in ſolemn ſhade.
Lo! where fair Venus ſparkles in her ſphere,
And the pale Moon, already in her wane,
Affords but half her light. Dear Inis ſee
If from the topmoſt tower you can diſcern
The ſemblance of a traveller, or hear
The ſound of horſes feet, approach this way. [*Exit* Inis.

Unhappy Theodora! how my heart
Feels for her ſharp diſtreſſes. Gracious powers!
Have pity on her. Hope and fear, by turns
Diſturb my breaſt. If Carlos ſhou'd arrive
With joyful tidings, peace perhaps may ſpread
Her downy pinions o'er the lovely mourner,
And joy ſhall once again be ſeen to riſe
Like Heſperus, the meſſenger of morn.

Enter Inis.

INIS.

Prophetic were thy thoughts! upon the moor,
On a white palfrey, I perceive a man
This way direct his courſe. The ſteed beſpeaks
His rider to be Carlos. Yet methinks
The tardy pace with which he does advance,
Augurs ill fortune to our duteous wiſhes.
Was he the herald of ſucceſs, I know
'Twou'd make him for a while forget his age,
And give him ſtrength and ſpeed to bring the news
To Theodora.

ELVIRA.

Venerable man!
He loves her, even with a parent's fondneſs;
But moſt he loves Don Guzman. Thirty years
Spent happily beneath this peaceful roof,
Has made him more the friend of Guzman's houſe
Than as a ſervant to its owner. Hark!
I hear his horſes feet. Oh! let us haſten,
And learn the tidings, ere he meets our lady. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment.*—Theodora *is ſeen kneeling in the back Ground; riſes, and comes forward.*

THEODORA.

May fate be found propitious to my prayer!—
Oh Guzman! Guzman! in this ſolemn hour
Of ſad nocturnal ſilence, thou perhaps
Art wretched as myſelf; may fondly wiſh
For Theodora to partake thy ſorrows,
And deem thy daughter's conduct is unkind,
That ſhe forbears to make the gloomy priſon,
Which thou inhabiteſt, her home. I dread
To hear the news that Carlos may impart.
Anticipating horror, I deſpair
Of better times, and almoſt dare accuſe
Thoſe holy powers, that ſeem to have forſaken
The innocent and virtuous Guzman.

Enter Inis.

INIS.

Madam,
Carlos is juſt arriv'd, and waits your pleaſure
To be admitted.

THEODORA.

Oh conduct him hither.
How do I tremble! my alarmed ſpirit
Preſages ſomething adverſe to my hopes:
Impatient as I am to learn the truth,
I ſcarce can ſummon fortitude to aſk it.

Enter Carlos.

THEODORA.

Oh ſay, does Garcia's cruel heart relent?
Does he, in pity to a daughter's tears,
Relax from his ſeverity, and give
Attention to my prayer?

CARLOS.

Lady! in vain
Did I petition for my maſter's freedom.
I try'd what abject prayers, what tears wou'd do;
Deſcrib'd thy ſorrows; begg'd him to releaſe
His priſoner, till his kinſman Don Antonio
Returns to Spain. He ſmiled to ſee my grief.
His harden'd heart, feroce and arrogant,
Seem'd to exult at Guzman's miſery,
And feed on his diſtreſſes: with an eye
That glanc'd obdurate pride, he ſaw me weep,
Then bade me (ſcornfully) forbear to preach,
Or go to Guzman's cell, and exerciſe
My leſſons of morality with him.

THEODORA.

Barbarian! yet my faithful Carlos, how
Could I expect the man who had denied
Compaſſion to the worth, the dignity,
Infirmities, and age of my poor father,
Wou'd liſten to a woman's feeble cry,
Or grant attention to thy honeſt prayer?
My heart, at every word thou doſt pronounce,
Turns cold with horror—icy terror creeps
Thro' ev'ry vein, and makes me dread to aſk
If thou haſt ſeen my father?

CARLOS.

To a cell,
Within a diſmal dungeon, I was led:
A gleam of light, pervading thro' the bars
Of a ſmall window, juſt ſuffic'd to ſhew
The horror of the ſcene. In fetters bound,
Upon a bed of ſtraw, Don Guzman lay.
He who was wont, beneath a canopy
Of rich embroider'd velvet to repoſe,
And reſt his aged limbs on beds of down,
Now, without covering, ſave the humid roof
Of this dark priſon (where the wholeſome air
And purifying ſun can never come)
Like to the meaneſt criminal I found,
The victim of his enemy's oppreſſion;
A cruſe of water, and a cruſt of bread,
The fare his cruel creditor allow'd.

THEODORA.

Oh my unhappy parent!

CARLOS.

Yet his ſoul
Superior to his fortune, ſoars above
All mean repinings. He received me calm,
And even ſmiling. Here, ſaid he, I learn
The inſufficiency of human greatneſs:
Here let the multitude, who have ador'd
Riches and pomp, behold how quickly time
Can change our fortunes, and at one hard blow
Level the noble with the poor. I owe
To this reverſe a knowledge of myſelf,
Which in proſperity I ne'er had gain'd.
Too long, my Carlos! have I ſacrific'd
At the deluſive and ideal ſhrine
Of falſe vain-glory. I with pain retrace

The paſt, and ſee that error was my guide
In many paths, wherein by pride betray'd
I long have wander'd. In theſe gloomy walls
I learn humility. I bow reſign'd
To the chaſtiſing hand of Providence;
And till the vital ſpark of life decays,
Patience ſhall be my tutelary friend.

THEODORA.

Alas my father! far advanc'd in life,
Oppreſs'd with ſorrow, and expos'd to ſhame,
There wanted not the rigours of a priſon
To ſend him to his grave. Ill-fated man!
He, unaccuſtom'd to ſuch hardſhips, uſed
To all the ſoft indulgencies of life,
Can never bear it long. Alas, good Carlos!
The thought of ſuch diſtreſſes wounds my heart,
And tells me, it is poſſible to be
More wretched than I am. Immortal Powers!
Have I for this endured a thouſand woes,
Borne with exiſtence, ſtifled my complaints?
Was it for this that I ſurvived Alphonſo?

CARLOS.

My noble maſter bade me charge thee, lady!
To waſte no cares on him; to be at reſt
Concerning his condition, and to wait
In patience, till Antonio ſhall arrive.

THEODORA.

Antonio! No! I will not dare expect him.
He is divided from us by the Sea;
And, Carlos, know the ocean is at war
With wretched Theodora—it depriv'd
Me of Alphonſo How can I believe
Thoſe waves, that robb'd me of ſo rich a prize,

Will ever be propitious to my wiſhes.
If tears, if ſighs, had power to make them kind,
They wou'd not have bereav'd me of my love;
I therefore have no confidence in them;
I can expect no bleſſings from the Sea;
I loath the ſight of it; I hate the ſound
Of the hoarſe murmuring billows; I deteſt
Whatever appertains thereto. The Sea
And Theodora are at enmity;
And there Antonio may be doom'd to periſh,
Like my Alphonſo. Shall I tamely wait,
Depending on aſſiſtance, which may come
When wretched Guzman has no longer power
To profit from it? No! I will behold
This man of ſavage nature—I will ſee
The cruel Garcia—lowly at his feet
I will petition for my ſire, nor riſe
From the cold earth until he grants my prayer.
I will implore him, haunt him like a ghoſt,
And ſpeak my ſufferings with ſuch energy,
That his hard heart will learn to feel compaſſion.

CARLOS.

I fear th' attempt will be in vain. Yet ſure
Thy eloquence, thy filial piety,
Is ſuch, that if a ſpark of goodneſs dwells
Within his breaſt beneath that cloak of pride,
It will be kindled in ſo juſt a cauſe. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE V.—*The Quay at Tunis.*

Enter Alphonſo *and* Antonio, *with Mariners.*

ALPHONSO.

The roſy Morn acroſs the ether throws
A gleam of light, and Cynthia's mirky ſhades
Retire at her approach. Hail cheerful dawn!
May thy augmenting light preſage ſucceſs
To my fond wiſhes. May propitious gales
Wait on the veſſel deſtin'd to convey
A long-loſt lover to the faithful maid
Who has been ever preſent to his thoughts.
Oh Time! who haſt with ſlow and ſullen pace
Borne me thro' ſix long years of ſervitude,
Soon as I reach the coaſt of Spain, I doubt
I ſhall accuſe thee of velocity,
And ſwear that thou haſt ſtol'n the wings of love,
With which thou doſt perform thy ſwift career.
Abſent from thoſe belov'd, we chide the hours,
The lingering hours, that keep us from their ſight;
But when we meet, each hour too ſhort appears,
And we regret the moments that are gone.
Come, my Antonio .... (*Muſic is heard.*)
Hah! what ſounds are theſe?

ANTONIO.

See! where the generous Selim comes, to grace
Our embarkation with his friendly preſence.
(*Enter* Selim, *with Muſic, Attendants, &c.*)
Oh Sir! this condeſcenſion is ſo great
That words are wanting to declare our thanks,
In language ſuited to the obligation.

Can

Can mighty Selim thus diſdain repoſe?
Fly from magnificence and luxury,
And at this early hour forſake the roof
Of eaſe and happineſs, to teſtify
The power of friendſhip?

SELIM.

Yes, my good Antonio!
To thee and to Alphonſo I rejoice
In paying ev'ry mark of due eſteem.
The moon fades ſick'ning at the beamy ſun;
The lark's ſweet muſic is of little worth,
When ſweeter nightingales exert their lay;
Thus the delights which I ſo lately priz'd,
The joys that on magnificence attend,
Loſe their accuſtom'd charms, when thoſe ſerene
Thoſe generous pleaſures, friendſhip can beſtow,
Are put in competition. I am glad
To prove *that* friendſhip, and to be the means
Of happineſs to thoſe I love ſo well;
Yet ſhall I grieve to ſee the riſing gales
Flutter among the ſails that muſt convey
My friends from Tunis. Since we are to part,
Accept my wiſhes. May ſucceſs attend
On all your expectations. Health and joy,
Love and content, your utmoſt hopes befriend.

ALPHONSO.

Whatever fortune may on us await,
Still, generous Selim, ſhall we think on thee,
(The author of my freedom!) every wiſh,
For long continuance of proſperity,
And all the good thy virtue can deſerve,
My grateful heart will offer.

SELIM.

SELIM.

Fare thee well
Antonio!

ANTONIO. (*Embracing him.*)

Selim! I am juſtly bound
By all the ties of honour, gratitude,
And friendſhip, in my calendar of time,
To mark with white the happy day that brought
Me firſt to Tunis. It ſhall dated be,
As the moſt joyful æra of my life,
Since it reſtor'd to me my loſt Alphonſo,
And by the means of ſuch a friend as Selim. (*Shout of*
The riſing breeze invites us to embark, *Sailors.*)
And ardour glows in every ſailor's face.
Farewell, and be aſſur'd, till life ſhall ceaſe,
Antonio will eſteem and honour thee.
Where'er my fortune dooms my ſteps to ſtray,
Whether to deſerts wild, or proſpects gay,
Thy virtues, regiſter'd within my mind,
The homage of my grateful thoughts will bind;
And while I live, I never can forget
How much Antonio is in Selim's debt.

(*They move to the Beach.—Dumb Shew.—They embark.—The Veſſel is ſeen ſailing.—The Sailors ſhout.*—Selim *returns acroſs the Stage, with his Attendants and Muſic.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A magnificent Hall.*—Garcia *in a Chair of State.*

Enter Fernandez.

FERNANDEZ.

MY Lord! a woman is without, who craves
Admiſſion to your preſence.

GARCIA.

I am weary
Of theſe intruders. 'Tis ſome mendicant,
Who thinks perhaps, becauſe I'm affluent,
I muſt extravagantly means ſupply
For her neceſſities. I will not ſee her.

FERNANDEZ.

My lord, I bade her not preſume to ſtay
Thus at thy door; but ſhe proteſts aloud
She never will remove, or eat, or ſleep,
Till ſhe obtains acceſs. Another woman
Attends her, weeping.

GARCIA.

Bring them in, Fernandez. [*Exit* Fernandez.
'Tis time to ſilence this impertinence.
The Great are ever ſubject to intruſions,
And muſt aſſert their rightful dignity,
To awe the forwardneſs of ſtrangers.

Enter

Enter Theodora *and* Elvira *(veil'd.)*

THEODORA (*kneeling.*)

The wretched daughter of an hapleſs man,
Whoſe only crime is his adverſity,
Is urged by piety to bend a knee,
Which ne'er, except to Heaven, has bent till now.

GARCIA.

Who art thou, woman?

THEODORA.

I am Guzman's daughter;—
Guzman the good, the aged, the unhappy;
Guzman, thy priſoner. If e'er thy ſoul
Has known compaſſion; if thou canſt delight
In deeds of virtue; if thou doſt deſire
The praiſe of millions, and the thankful prayers
Of thoſe thou canſt make happy; pardon, Sir,
This bold addreſs, and give me back my father!

GARCIA (*aſide.*)

Her voice awakens pity, and inclines
My ſoul to generoſity. Yet pride
Requires that I ſhou'd not at once conſent,
But by reluctance raiſe the obligation.

THEODORA.

Will nothing move thee?

GARCIA.

Woman! I ſuſpect
Thou art ſome baſe impoſtor, hired by Carlos
(That old audacious wretch, who dares moleſt me
With his repeated prayers.)

THEODORA.

Ye ſacred Powers!
Can Guzman's daughter be ſuſpected thus?

Can

Can an impoſtor counterfeit the voice
Of filial ſorrow?—imitate the pangs
That rend my heart? Upon this grief-worn face,
Thy doubts ſhall end: the picture of diſtreſs,
The ſemblance of my father's features, there
Shall meet thy view, and ſtrike thee with conviction.
(Takes off her Veil.)

GARCIA. *(ſtarts and raiſes her.)*

Riſe, madam, riſe; I can no longer doubt.
Thoſe features never were deſign'd by Heaven
For any perſon of ignoble birth.
(Aſide.) Her eyes have fix'd an arrow in my heart,
And bound me her's, in chains of ſtronger mould
Than thoſe Don Guzman wears. But ſoft, 'tis beſt
I ſhou'd diſſemble, and avail myſelf
Of her afflictions and neceſſity.

ELVIRA.

My Lord is much diſpleas'd; tis beſt to leave
An unavailing ſuit, nor urge him farther.

THEODORA.

I will not think ſo meanly of Don Garcia.
Altho' he is my foe, and has inflicted
Such poignant ſuff'rings on the noble Guzman,
I will not think him quite devoid of pity:
He cannot find delight in dealing woe,
And curſing thoſe who never did him wrong.

GARCIA. *(aſide.)*

What dignity attends on all ſhe ſays;
What artleſs beauty dwells upon her face.
Oh, I could gaze for ever! and adore
That form, as pilgrims do their darling ſaints.
Ah! may it be the model of her mind,
Serene as ſummer ſkies, and pure as ſnow,

New dropp'd from Heaven upon the mountain's top.
(*To her*) Madam, I wiſh the tenor of your prayer
Was ſuch as I approv'd: I own I bear
A deadly enmity to Guzman's houſe;
I have been long diſguſted with the ſtate
Affected by thy ſire. His negligence
Of payment, and his want of due reſpect
To me, whoſe father was ſo much his friend,
Nay more, his benefactor . . . .

THEODORA.

——— Benefactor!
Cou'd Guzman want one? *He*, who long has been
So generous to others. Sir, indeed
You wrong my father—*He* could never ſtoop,
Could never wiſh to be ſo much obliged.
His anceſtors (a long and virtuous line)
Have never ſully'd their illuſtrious lives
By an ignoble action. They have been
Patrons to indigence, and friends to merit.
They bought no honours upon ſervile terms;
Their bright hereditary dignity,
With every generation gain'd new ſplendour.
Of this, the noble Guzman is the laſt;
Nor has he e'er degraded from his rank,
Or ſtamp'd diſhonour on a ſpotleſs name.
Could he ſo far forget himſelf, to ſtoop
To mean and worthleſs actions, he had not
Been thus, in his old age, reduced to wear
Thy bonds, nor had his daughter ever aſk'd
Attention from a man declared his foe.

ELVIRA.

Madam, forbear.

GARCIA *(ſcornfully.)*

I muſt confeſs, this ſpeech,
From one who does expect to be obliged,
Is ſtrange, and muſt defeat the purpoſes
For which you gain'd your audience. I am not
To be intimidated by a frown. The whole
That I can grant, is leave to ſee your father.
To-morrow, at this hour, attend me here,
But learn an humbler language. [*Exit with* Fernandez.

ELVIRA.

Theodora!
In vain doſt thou expect to find redreſs
From that obdurate monſter: he enjoys
Thy ſharp affliction, triumphs in thy pain,
And meditates augmenting cruelty.
I wou'd adviſe thee to behold Don Guzman,
And then to leave Madrid.

THEODORA.

To leave Madrid?
Never while I have power to ſtay. I mean,
If liberty is ſtill denied my father,
To beg imperious Garcia will allow
A wretched daughter to partake his chains.
What is the world to me? I bid adieu
To all within it, and with joy accept
Impriſonment for him, whom every tie
Of duty and affection bids me ſerve.

(*Going out, ſhe meets* Fernandez.)

FERNANDEZ.

Madam, Don Guzman has been indiſpos'd
Throughout the night: and leſt the great ſurprize
Of your arrival might encreaſe his fever,
I have diſpatch'd your faithful ſervant Carlos,
Who will prepare him for your coming. Garcia

Has kindly granted the ſociety
Of his old ſervant to the hapleſs Guzman.

THEODORA.

For this indulgence I am bound to thank him. *(going.)*

FERNANDEZ.

Let me entreat you yet awhile to ſtay;
There muſt be time for him to learn the news;
Time to receive his daughter with compoſure.
Pedro, the ſage phyſician who attends him,
Forbids acceſs to him until to-morrow.

THEODORA.

Sir! 'tis impoſſible I can remain
Beneath a roof ſo adverſe to my wiſhes.
No! I at all events muſt ſeek my father.
In his declining health, I now foreſee
The utmoſt of my ſuff'rings. Cruel fate!
To what a ſcene muſt I become the witneſs. *(weeps.)*

Enter Don Garcia.

GARCIA.

Fair Theodora! Muſt thoſe radiant eyes
Shed tears of ſorrow? they were not deſign'd
To be interpreters of grief; their beams
Shou'd not be thus eclips'd by melancholy,
But by their luſtre dazzle all mankind.

THEODORA. *(aſide.)*

Amazing change! What does this language mean?

GARCIA.

'Tis in thy power to make that lovely face
Be clad in ſmiles; to bid thy cheek reſume
Its ſemblance to vermilion, and thy heart
Awake to joy, proſperity, and love.

THEODORA.

THEODORA.

Oh Sir, it is impoſſible! My heart
Is dyed with ſuch a deep and mournful hue,
(Form'd by the faſhion of my miſeries,)
There does not live a being under Heaven,
Whoſe power can change the tenor of my ſoul.
Grief is the very eſſence of my life;
I feed upon it; 'tis enwoven, Sir,
With my exiſtence. I was born to ſuffer;
It is my diſpoſition to be ſad;
'Tis your's, I find, my ſorrows to enlarge.

GARCIA.

Yet fair one, do not pour thoſe precious tears
Without ſufficient cauſe. When Guzman's death
Enſues, you will have reaſon for affliction
Beyond whatever you have yet experienc'd.

THEODORA.

My father's death! Oh, Heaven! and muſt he die?
Perhaps ev'n now . . . . but wherefore do I linger?
Oh let me haſten to him! *(going.)*

Enter Pedro *(the Phyſician.)*

GARCIA.

Pedro, ſay,
How fares your patient?

PEDRO.

As a man, my Lord,
Approaching to the borders of the grave.
I yeſterday believ'd him ſomething better,
But now I find his malady returns
With double violence.

THEODORA.

Moſt dreadful tidings!
Oh ſay, can nothing, nothing, ſave my father?

PEDRO.

Lady, his age is much againſt him; yet
Was he releas'd from his impriſonment,
Reſtor'd to the indulgencies of life,
Allow'd to breathe the freſhneſs of the air,
And nouriſh'd with a proper ſort of diet,
All might, I think, be well.

THEODORA.

Oh Garcia! Garcia!
Give but my father to his daughter's arms,
And I will bleſs thee with my lateſt breath.
Let not time brand thee with the odious name
Of Guzman's murderer! I will with joy
Become a priſoner in his ſtead for life,
And pray for Garcia while I wear his chains.

GARCIA.

Nay, do not weep again. By Heav'n! each tear
That ebbs within thine eye hangs like a pearl
Of dew, by fair Aurora's fingers ſhed,
Upon the freſheſt leaf the grove can boaſt.

ELVIRA (*aſide.*)

The magic of her charms has touch'd his heart.

GARCIA.

Pale as thou art, yet is thy beauty bright;
So have I ſeen the lonely ſtar of morn.
And as the tear is gliſtening on thy cheek,
So have I mark'd a bloſſom charg'd with dew.
But many flowers there are, and only one,

One

One morning ſtar. Thou then art like the laſt,
For there is none can vie with Theodora.

THEODORA.

This language, Sir, I do not underſtand;
'Tis adding inſult unto cruelty.
Excuſe me if I beg to take my leave.

GARCIA.

Yet I conjure thee for a moment ſtay.
Retire awhile (*to* Fernandez *and* Elvira, *who retire.*)
Angelic Theodora!
'Tis in thy power to ſave Don Guzman.

THEODORA.

How?
Name the conditions!

GARCIA.

By eſpouſing me.

THEODORA.

Eſpouſing thee! Oh Garcia! thou haſt claim'd
The only tribute I can never pay
Towards my father's life.

GARCIA.

That ſullen frown
Speaks thy deciſion. Go then, and embrace
Thy dying parent.

THEODORA.

Wou'd'ſt thou have me buy
His life by perjury? canſt thou deſire
Alone the ſhadow of an heart? a vow
Bedew'd with tears? a hand which muſt recoil
And tremble at the altar?

GARCIA.

I wou'd be
Content to win thee upon any terms.
But I perceive, not even cold conſent
Can be obtain'd from Theodora's lips.

THEODORA.

Oh, I have many reaſons to refuſe thee,
Which I cannot divulge.

GARCIA.

Then let them lie
Sepulchred in a breaſt, whoſe marble bounds
Abhors my homage, and rejects my ſuit.
Thou haughty woman! I will waſte on thee
No more perſuaſions; if it is thy will,
Continue to appear thus: on thy brow
Retain the marks of obſtinate diſdain,
But by the Gods! thy father's life....

THEODORA.

Forbear!
Speak not the cruel ſentence.

GARCIA.

Theodora!
Thou with a ſingle glance haſt won a heart,
That Spain's moſt celebrated dames in vain
Have try'd to render vulnerable. Learn
To take advantage of my ſudden paſſion.
The only means you have to ſave your father
Is to accept of Garcia's hand. By Heaven!
I wonder at my weakneſs. Love has caught
My heart as quickly as the lightning plays.
I doat upon thy beauty.—I endure
A violence of love, till now unknown,
Which bids me place thee as the arbitreſs

Of

Of Guzman's fate, and Garcia's bliſs. Fernandez!
Elvira! you may enter. (*they approach.*)
Theodora,
Farewell! Reflect upon my words. I give
Thee 'till to-morrow for thy final anſwer. [*Exit.*

FERNANDEZ.

Think, madam, what a glorious deed 'twill be
To ſave the ſuff'ring Guzman. He deſpairs
Of any comfort on this ſide the grave,
Expects his death, but lingers ſtill in pain.
Think what a ſatisfaction will be thine,
To break his bonds, to free him from his debt,
To make his future days be calm and happy,
To gain the mighty Garcia for his friend,
And win the praiſes of admiring crowds.
Soon as the clock ſhall ſound the veſper's hour,
You may demand admiſſion to the priſon;
Behold Don Guzman there, and fix his fate. [*Exit.*

THEODORA.

To what a precipice of dark deſpair
Am I arriv'd! Oh, my Elvira! why
Can I not cloſe theſe ſad, theſe weary eyes,
And ſleep, to wake no more? Each way I turn,
Some new and horrible diſtreſs appears.
How can I ſee my deareſt father dying,
And not devote myſelf to ſave his life?
Yet can I join in Hymen's bands with him
Whom I abhor? th' oppreſſor of my parent!
The cruel enemy to our repoſe,
Our dignity, our freedom! owe to him
An obligation I muſt buy ſo dearly!
Break thro' my vows! be falſe to my Alphonſo!

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.

Alas! ſince thy Alphonſo is no more,
In wedding Garcia thou wilt not be perjur'd.
It cannot ſure offend his happy ſhade
To ſee thee act a noble heroine's part,
And ſave a father at thine own expence.

THEODORA.

Guzman, tho' tortur'd, never wou'd conſent
To ſee his daughter married to his foe;
(The bitter foe to his tranquillity.)
His aged cheeks wou'd glow with conſcious ſhame,
Was he to gain his liberty by means
So baſe and ſervile. No! he wou'd endure
The agonies of death with fortitude,
Rather than ſpin out dull ignoble life
On terms of miſery to Theodora,
And of diſhonour to himſelf. (*clock ſtrikes.*)
'Tis fix'd;
He *muſt* be Garcia's prey. Oh come, Elvira!
It is the time for us to gain admittance,
The bell invites me to this ſolemn viſit. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Priſon.*—Carlos *is ſeen ſupporting* Guzman.

Enter Theodora *and* Elvira.

GUZMAN.

Alas, my child! why doſt thou hither come?
Oh ſhun theſe melancholy walls! At length,
Garcia relenting from his cruelty,
Has ſent the faithful Carlos to attend me.

It

It is enough—I thank him for the deed,
And am content. Retire, my Theodora;
Pain me not with thy ſight. I feel for thee
More than myſelf. Oh that I ſhou'd have liv'd
To ſay it gives me pain to ſee my child!

ELVIRA.

May we not hope, my Lord, that you are better?

CARLOS.

He is too weak to bear much converſation.
I wou'd adviſe you to retire.

THEODORA,

(after a mournful pauſe, taking Guzman's *hand.)*

My father!
(Oh Heavens! a cold and ſickly dew hangs on him.)
What ſuſtenance has been afforded thee?

GUZMAN.

My ſuſtenance is hope and chriſtian faith.

THEODORA.

How haſt thou reſted?

GUZMAN.

Oh my Theodora!
I have not ſlept—but I ſhall ſoon repoſe.

CARLOS *(aſide.)*

He cannot linger long. Let me entreat
You not to ſtay, nor with intemperate grief
Diſturb his dying moments.

THEODORA.

Carlos, no!
You ſee me calm and reſolute. I now
Will try to feign compoſure; will repreſs
All womaniſh complainings, loud diſtreſſes,
And all the tortures of a bleeding heart!

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.

Oh, madam! look upon him; ſee that face,
Serene, majeſtic, even great in death.
He ſheds around him reverence and awe.
Ye Gods have pity on him!

GUZMAN. (*looking tenderly at* Theodora.)
Theodora!
Forgive me all the ſorrows I have caus'd thee
For thy Alphonſo. Heaven has puniſhed
My rigour to the Youth. I own the juſtice
Of Providence in this. Draw nearer, child;
Receive my bleſſing *(embraces her.)* I entreat thee live,
Live in the hopes of my Antonio's care.
He will defend thee from my enemies,
He will protect and be a parent to thee.
Farewell! I pray thee leave me—I am faint,
And wiſh to be alone.

THEODORA (*aſide.*)
Unhappy Guzman!
I cannot bear it .... I reſign myſelf;
Yes, I will be the ſacrifice! 'Tis juſt
I ſhou'd preſerve the author of my life.
Compaſſion, duty, and affection urge
The pious deed. I go to ſave a father!
(*To him*) Farewell! may pitying ſaints adminiſter
Aſſiſtance to thee! [*Exit with* Elvira.

GUZMAN.
Carlos, I am weary,
And want to ſleep; lend me your arm, I pray you.
I will endeavour, if 'tis poſſible,
To loſe remembrance of my woes awhile
In the ſoft arms of ſleep. Within my cell
Let us retire; I feel a heavineſs

Spread

Spread over all my limbs.—I wou'd it were
The hand of death; for what, alas! have I
To do with life? I am a poor old man,
Depriv'd of honours, dignity, and fortune;
Oppreſs'd with ſorrow, and content to die.
Carlos, I often have been lull'd to ſleep
By the ſoft muſic of thy lute. Oh play
Some ſoothing ſtrains, which may compoſe my ſoul,
And lull my cares to reſt!

(They enter the Cell.—Guzman *lays on a Bed of Straw.* —Carlos *ſits by the entrance of the Cell, and plays ſome time.)*

Enter Elvira, *haſtily.*

ELVIRA.

Where is my maſter?

CARLOS (*coming out.*)

Silence! he repoſes.
Nature, exhauſted with her ſufferings,
At length allows his weary eyes to reſt.

ELVIRA.

And when he wakes, he will awake to freedom!

CARLOS.

What doſt thou mean?

ELVIRA.

The generous Theodora
Has ſacrific'd herſelf to gain his freedom.
This moment ſees her wedded unto Garcia!

CARLOS.

Oh Heaven! I freeze with horror! yet my ſoul
Approves the great, th' heroic ſacrifice!

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.

I never ſhall forget with what a look
(Ere ſhe reſign'd her hand) the mournful fair
Turn'd her bright eyes towards the vault of Heaven,
As tho' her heart accus'd the cruel fates,
That drove her to the extreme of miſery.
The fatal yes came from her trembling lips,
Encumber'd with a ſigh, which ſeem'd to ſay,
I dedicate myſelf to worſe than death.

CARLOS.

Moſt virtuous of her ſex! exalted woman!
Can Spain produce another proof ſo great
Of filial piety?

ELVIRA.

We muſt be careful,
Good Carlos, how we tell this wond'rous news
To noble Guzman. He will ſcorn the means
That break his chains, and rather will remain
A voluntary priſoner, than accept
Of freedom bought ſo dearly. (Guzman *wakes.*)

GUZMAN.

Sleep's ſoft balm
Has brought refreſhment to this feeble frame.
Ah! wherefore are my ſufferings prolong'd?
Why does this ſickly taper yet revive?
I do not aſk to live. I was in hopes
This ſlumber was the prelude unto death.
In ſleep's ſoft bonds I had forgot my cares.
A ſweet oblivion wafted from my brain
All melancholy thoughts. Why do I wake,
To ſee again theſe dark ill-omen'd walls?
(Carlos *raiſes him.*—Guzman *comes forward, leaning on* Carlos.)

Oh Carlos! I have had a dream—I wiſh
It could for ever laſt. I dreamt, alas!
I was releas'd from proud oppreſſion's bonds,
And by the ſide of Theodora ſtray'd
In ſpicy groves, where heavenly ſounds were heard
To welcome us to peace and happineſs.

ELVIRA.

Prophetic viſion!

GUZMAN.

No, thou gentle maid,
The Heavens have no more happineſs in ſtore
For wretched Guzman!

CARLOS.

Nay, my deareſt Lord,
Do not deſpond: *that* Providence which doom'd
Your limbs to wear ignoble bonds, can give
The liberty you now lament. Yes, Sir,
The hour arrives wherein your fortitude,
Your patience, and your reſignation, meets
With its reward. The heart of Garcia melts
At Theodora's grief—her filial love
Has won his pity.

GUZMAN.

Do I hear aright?
Am I not ſtill aſleep? is't poſſible!
Can that inexorable man relent?

ELVIRA.

My Lord! may Heaven reſtore thy health, and give
Thee many years of liberty and peace.
The virtuous Theodora breaks thy chains!

GUZMAN.

Amazement! I can ſcarce ſuppoſe it true.

ELVIRA.

A perſon comes who will confirm the tidings.

Enter

Enter Liſardo.

LISARDO.

The princely Garcia ſends me with his greetings
To noble Guzman. From theſe hands I take
The chains he bluſhes have ſo long confin'd them.
I have directions to conduct thee ſtraight
Unto his manſion.

GUZMAN.

Friend, within theſe walls
I've loſt my pride, and learn'd humility,
Therefore I will obey; and with what ſpeed
My weakneſs will allow, I'll follow thee. [*Exit* Liſardo.
Come Carlos, come Elvira, we will go
From this receptacle for want and woe.
Immortal Powers! if 'tis your fix'd decree
To give me back to ſmiling liberty,
I wou'd avoid the opening gates of death,
And pray the Parcæ to prolong my breath;
Depriv'd of freedom, and by ſhame oppreſs'd,
Of every place the grave appears the beſt;
But if our liberty can be reſtor'd,
We wiſh to keep the life we late abhorr'd.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Madrid.*

Enter Alphonſo *and* Antonio.

ALPHONSO.

THIS glorious morning, with a face of joy,
Seems to diffuſe good omens. Oh my friend!
Ne'er has yon orb of day to me appear'd
So bright, nor has creation look'd ſo gay,
As in this happy hour of our return.
I muſt, Antonio, for a moment go
To take poſſeſſion of my brother's houſe,
And then will fly to meet thee on the Prado.
Soon as thou art at leiſure, we will haſten
Towards the dwelling of Don Guzman; there
(Oh joy beyond expreſſion!) I ſhall claim
My faithful, gentle, beauteous Theodora. [*Exit.*

ANTONIO (*looking after him.*)

Yes, thy long ſufferings and thy conſtancy
Will meet with their reward. Thou haſt been try'd
By fate, and found deſerving of a prize.
Oh may thy future days, my friend, be happy,
And all thy paſt misfortunes be forgotten.—
But who is this, who with dejected air

Slowly moves on, and ſeems bow'd down with age?
'Tis ſure the face of venerable Carlos!

Enter Carlos, *in mourning.*

CARLOS.

Hah! do mine eyes deceive me? Don Antonio!

ANTONIO.

Carlos! I am rejoic'd to ſee thee.—Yet
The ſable garb in which thou art array'd,
Strikes me with thoughts of ſympathetic hue,
And turns my joy to ſorrow. I foreſee
By thy attire I muſt have loſt a friend.
Say, does Don Guzman live?

CARLOS.

Oh, gentle Sir!
How much calamity had been prevented
Hadſt thou arriv'd in Spain a month ago.

ANTONIO.

What doſt thou mean?

CARLOS.

My maſter is no more.
And in Madrid I ſtay to give the orders
Concerning his funereal rites.

ANTONIO.

Alas!
What mournful news! Oh tell me Carlos, where
Is Theodora?

CARLOS.

When my maſter died,
She left Madrid, and in the deepeſt grief
Retired, at diſtance from the capital,
To weep in private.

ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

I am all amazement!
Did Guzman in Madrid expire? I heard
His manſion in the city was conſumed.
I wiſh I had arriv'd in time to aſk
A bleſſing from his venerable lips,
And cloſe his aged eyes.

CARLOS.

I was in hopes,
After he left the priſon . . . .

ANTONIO.

How! a priſon!

CARLOS.

I was in hopes his health wou'd be reſtor'd.
But when he found his liberty was gain'd
By Theodora's marriage with Don Garcia, (Antonio
The fatal ſecret ſtruck him to the ſoul, *ſtarts.*)
Speechleſs he fell, and with a groan expir'd!

ANTONIO.

Can this be true? moſt cruel diſappointment!
Oh Theodora! what a fund of joy,
Of happineſs, of love, haſt thou deſtroy'd.
The fabric faſhion'd by Alphonſo's hopes,
At once diſſolves and vaniſhes in air.

CARLOS.

Alphonſo! does he live? ye righteous powers,
If this be poſſible, what ſad regret
Will mark the remnant of my lady's days!
Her heart is ſtill attach'd to him alone;
She cheriſhes the memory of his love,
And vainly tries to reconcile herſelf
To that regard ſhe ought to pay her huſband.

ANTONIO.

Her huſband! Oh there's horror in the ſound!
His ties are made by guilt and artifice,
And are not valid in the ſight of juſtice.
Garcia's the man I'm bound to execrate.
He has to ſhame expos'd my family;
He has conſtrain'd my couſin to eſpouſe him.
Conſent, by ſuch ignoble means obtain'd,
Is fraught with treachery. The great reſpect
I bear to Theodora checks my rage,
Or by the Gods ....

CARLOS.

Oh, generous youth, forbear!
Suppreſs this honeſt rage: in times like theſe,
Virtue's a plant of ſuch a barren growth,
It will not meet with a reward. The vile,
The wicked triumph; and the worthy few
Who tread the paths of honour cannot ſtem
The tide of profligacy. Be compos'd,
Be cautious. Garcia is a man, I fear,
Of ſuch malignant temper, that methinks,
Much as he doats upon his lovely bride,
If jealouſy ſhou'd e'er diſturb his reſt,
He'd ſacrifice her to ſome mean ſuſpicion:
Her life depends upon your prudence.

ANTONIO.

Yes,
Her life, her reputation, ſhall by me
Be guarded, rather than endanger'd. Come,
We to the Prado muſt direct our ſteps,
And meet Alphonſo. This diſtreſsful news
Will be the ruin of his new-born hope.

Like a fair bloſſom injur'd by a blight,
'Tis doom'd to periſh even in the bud,
Or to deform the tree it ſhou'd adorn. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in* Benevares *Caſtle.*

Garcia *and* Fernandez.

GARCIA.

'Tis true, Fernandez, I have cauſe for joy:
The beauteous Theodora is my bride;
(The boaſt of Spain, the faireſt work of nature!)
Oh! ſhe is all the poet's laviſh pen
Could e'er deſcribe. Her charms exceed by far
What painting can expreſs: a certain grace,
Peculiar to herſelf, adorns her words,
Improves thoſe charms, and faſcinates my ſoul.
Her voice is muſic unto Garcia's ear;
Her ſtep is majeſty. But, my Fernandez,
When I behold her deep immers'd in thought,
The big tear ſtarting from her down-caſt eye,
(Tho' ſhe in vain endeavours to repreſs it.)
When I obſerve the cold forced complaiſance
With which ſhe liſtens to my ardent love,
I fear her ſenſe of former injuries
Will baffle all my future acts of kindneſs;
And tho' her duty binds her to obedience,
Her heart can ne'er be reconciled to love.

FERNANDEZ.

Tho' you impriſon'd Guzman, yet methinks
Your rank, your love, your perſonal attractions,
The ſtate to which you rais'd her ſinking fortunes

Shou'd waken paſſion in a grateful boſom,
Unleſs her heart was pre-engaged.

GARCIA.

Fernandez!
Turn not my thoughts that way; I cannot bear it.
Much as I love her, yet by all my pride
I ſwear to be reveng'd.

FERNANDEZ.

My lord, I pray you
Not to ſuppoſe it probable; I deem
Fair Theodora of a different mould.
Honour and chaſtity (thoſe handmaids bright,
That ever wait at the tranſparent throne
Of virtue) regulate her ſpotleſs mind,
And rule o'er all her actions. Her concern
For Guzman's recent death may be alone
The ſource of her dejection. Time will cure
The wounds of filial ſorrow: let us hope
That aſſiduity, attention, love,
Reſpect, and ſoft indulgence may incline
Her heart to taſte the ſweets of affluence,
The ſmiles of pleaſure.

GARCIA.

How can I amuſe her!
This manſion, ſpacious and magnificent,
That never fail'd to ſtrike the traveller,
Obtains no praiſe from Theodora's tongue.
When ſhe appears to look upon the woods,
(Which ſkirt yon ample plain) I can perceive
Her mind is not directed by her eyes.
She gazes with a ſtrange and abſent air,
Nor ſeems to ſee the things thoſe eyes are fix'd on.
And if by chance ſhe turns towards the ſea,

She ſtarts, averts her head, and from her cheek
The quick blood fades, and leaves her like the form
Of Medicean Venus, rooted there,
And beautiful, tho' wanting animation.

FERNANDEZ.

My lord, ſhe comes, and ſeems abſorb'd in grief.

Enter Theodora *in deep mourning.*

GARCIA.

Fair Theodora, in this ſable dreſs
Thou doſt appear like Luna's heavenly orb,
When ſhe illuminates the hemiſphere,
And ſheds her rays upon the robe of night.
Oh chace the clouds of ſorrow from thy mind,
Try to be happy, and thou ſhalt be ſo.

THEODORA.

Tell me, my lord, to be reſpectful to thee;
Obedient, chaſte, and dutiful. Thro' life
Behold me ready to fulfil thy pleaſure.
Yet to be cheerful is an hopeleſs taſk,
In which, alas! I never can be vers'd.

GARCIA.

What, is there nothing in this world can cure
The ſolemn ſadneſs of thy ſoul? is wealth,
Magnificence, and dignity, below
Thy notice? muſt I ever wiſh in vain
To ſee joy beaming from thoſe beauteous eyes,
To ſee a ſmile upon that face divine?

THEODORA.

Preſs not th' ungrateful theme—it is enough
That I am bound to thee by nuptial ties.
I wou'd forget the manner how thoſe vows

Were form'd: Oh give me then ſufficient time
To reconcile myſelf to duty's laws;
Give me the leiſure to lament my father,
And to forget the reaſon of his death.
At preſent, Sir, I am not capable
Of being otherwiſe than ſad. You might
Oblige the Tagus to retire from Spain,
Sooner than baniſh ſorrow from my breaſt.
An evil planet at my birth preſided,
And doom'd my life to be a ſcene of woe.
In early youth I loſt my only brother,
The lov'd companion of my infant ſports;
In whom my parents had delighted ſeen
The promiſe of a bright maturity,
To crown their hopes, and gratify their pride.
My mother could not long ſurvive her ſon;
In happy hour for her, alas! ſhe died.
Our fortunes totter'd on the brink of ruin.
I loſt . . . . Oh Heaven! why ſhou'd I now recount
My various miſeries? my life has been
A repetition of the heavieſt loſſes
That ever woman has ſuſtain'd—the laſt
Was Guzman; then the ſum of my misfortunes,
The meaſure of my woes was full.

GARCIA.

Remember,
Altho' thy diſappointments have been great,
Yet thou haſt gain'd a huſband.

THEODORA.

True, my lord;
As ſuch I'll ever honour and obey thee.
The name of huſband is a ſacred title;
It claims reſpect, and . . . .

GARCIA.

GARCIA.

Madam .... I perceive
My preſence cannot be a pleaſure to thee.
'Tis ceremonious duty brings thee hither:
(Curſe on the formal ſound!) 'twill not content me.
I aſk for love, but Theodora's heart
Knows not the paſſion which for her I prove;
She talks of cold reſpect ....

THEODORA.

Yes! *that* reſpect
Bids Theodora prudently retire,
When Garcia ſeems averſe to company.
Excuſe me, Sir, if I no more intrude
Till you command me to appear before you. [*Exit.*

GARCIA.

She's gone, and like a melancholy ghoſt,
In parting gave a look that waked remorſe,
And ſtung my conſcience. She is proud, and ſees
Her influence o'er my heart; on which preſumption
She dares affect indifference to my love.
'Tis all caprice—the faſhion of her ſex.
What doſt thou think, Fernandez?

FERNANDEZ.

Good my lord!
I think that women are but gaudy pictures,
Beauteous to look on, made alone for ſhew:
But this I own, I'd rather have the picture.
For woman's beauty, like a tender flower
Will fade and wither at a blaſt of wind.
Their minds are feeble as the aſpen leaf,
Their inclinations ever prone to change.
A picture now will ſmile on me for years,

And

And keep its beauty and its honeſt looks,
Nor ever make me diſcontented with it.

GARCIA.

Fernandez, I confeſs thy words are juſt.
Theſe ſyrens oft enſnare us to our ruin,
And it is therefore wiſdom to diſtruſt them.
Indulgence makes them ſaucy and aſſuming.
The haughty Theodora ſees her power,
And thinks to render me an humble ſlave:
But ſhe ſhall find, unleſs her conduct changes,
I can be harſh, reſentful, and vindictive. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*At Madrid.—The Gate of St. Barbara at one end of the Prado.*

Alphonſo *and* Antonio.

ALPHONSO.

To ſpeak of comfort unto one ſo loſt,
So wretched as myſelf, is needleſs. Oh!
You might as ſoon expect the ſhipwreck'd man,
(Who 'ſcaping from the fury of the waves,
Sits on a lonely rock, and caſts around
His melancholy eyes in queſt of hope)
To ceaſe deſpairing. I am caſt ſo low
In the abyſs of miſery, that none
Can ſave me from perdition. Yet I'll live
To ſee this faithleſs woman, to upbraid her;
To hear but once the muſic of her voice,
To read but once the language of her eyes,

And

And then pronounce a laſt adieu! Antonio,
Thou ſhalt not go alone to Benevares.

ANTONIO.

I rather counſel thee, my friend, to ſtay
Within Madrid till I have ſeen my couſin,
And broke to her the news of thy arrival.
I fear ſome raſhneſs, ſome imprudent ſally
Of thy impetuous love. Relationſhip,
And many family concerns, require
That I ſhou'd ſeek the hapleſs Theodora.
But what haſt thou to urge as thy excuſe?

ALPHONSO.

Truſt me, Antonio, I will not offend
The falſe one with my preſence, till I find
A ſeaſonable hour. I ſhall be calm,
And happy to inhale the ſame ſea breeze
That fans my Theodora's flowing robe.
It will be pleaſure for me to conceive
I view the ſcenes on which her eyes are bent,
And tread the verdure that her feet have preſs'd.
I only ſeek a refuge from deſpair,
Which haunts me here. Let us together go.
I know a man who was my father's tenant,
And holds a farm not far from Benevares;
To him will I repair, and govern'd be,
My dear Antonio, by thy ſage advice.

ANTONIO.

I yield to thy requeſt. To doubt thy honour,
Thy friendſhip, thy reſpect, for Theodora,
Wou'd be to wrong thy nobleneſs of ſoul.
Remember ſhe is now the wife of Garcia;

As

As ſuch, her pure unſullied fame demands
That I ſhou'd ſcreen her from the breath of ſlander.
To ſpeak of love is now a crime; to hear
The voice of lawleſs paſſion, is a fault
Which former ties can never authorize;
It bears ſimilitude to guilt—a word
That ſuits not any of the houſe of Guzman.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Sea-ſide by Moonlight.*

Enter Theodora.

THEODORA.

Hail, heavenly orb! by whoſe mild beams ſo oft
I have been wont to wander forth alone,
To ſteal a few ſhort hours for privacy,
And full indulgence for my griefs. Oh moon!
By whoſe pure light I have ſo often vow'd
To ſcorn all offers for Alphonſo's ſake,
And to be conſtant, even until death,
To his lov'd memory; wherefore doſt thou ſhine
Benignly on me. I'm a perjur'd wretch,
A creature who condemns herſelf—who ſtarts,
When with a retroſpective thought ſhe views
Her own miſdeeds. Chaſte moon! thou ſhou'dſt with-
Thy beams from me, and thoſe ſiderial orbs, [draw
Thoſe heavenly planets which adorn the ſky,
Bluſh in their ſpheres with ſuch a burning hue,

That

That all th' horizon ſhould appear inflam'd
With indignation. Whereſoe'er I tread
Nature's fair works ſhou'd tremble with diſmay:
Each purple violet wear a purple hue,
And every roſe-bud wither on the tree.
What have I done? I've ſacrific'd myſelf
To buy my father's life—too late, alas!
I meant to ſave him: death, with haſty hand,
Has puniſh'd me—Fate has perhaps abridg'd
Thoſe days I meant to lengthen. I have made,
Oh horror! vows of love, while in my heart
Averſion fix'd an everlaſting ſting:
I have made promiſes I muſt perform,
And bound myſelf, by honour's rigid laws,
To him I never can eſteem: I fall
The victim of my filial love; but there, (*pointing to*
There, is the ſource of all my miſery: *the Sea.*)
There, is a ſight I have ſo long abhorr'd,
And to whoſe ſhore my deſtiny has ſent me:
Thou treacherous ocean! thou haſt been the cauſe
Of Theodora's ruin. Oh return
My dear Alphonſo from his wat'ry bed.
Alas! I rave: thou canſt not give him to me.
If it were poſſible my voice could reach
The manſions of the dead—if I had power
To raiſe my lover from the depths below,
Fix'd to the beach I day and night wou'd ſtand,
And to the refluent tide addreſs myſelf,
Till to the ſhore it brought my lov'd Alphonſo.

ALPHONSO *(entering.)*

Who calls Alphonſo?

(Theodora *ſcreams, and runs off the Stage.*)

ALPHONSO.

ALPHONSO.

She is gone. The voice
Was ſurely Theodora's: horror chains
My feet unto the ground. I dare not wiſh
To puniſh her (perfidious as ſhe is)
With my reproaches. Yet, oh Heaven! do I
Condemn her? To her filial love and duty
She ſacrific'd Alphonſo! Her misfortunes,
And my ill-ſtars, are moſt to be accus'd;
For tho' ſhe yielded her devoted hand,
Her faithful heart, perhaps adhered to me.
A ſecret thought is buſy in my mind,
I will indulge it—Yes, it ſhall be ſo.

Enter Antonio.

ANTONIO.

Alphonſo, wherefore doſt thou linger here?
Have I not pray'd thee to avoid the paths
That lead to Benevares, till I gain
Admiſſion to my couſin, and have leiſure
To tell her by degrees the wond'rous news,
That her Alphonſo lives: her life, her fame
Might be endanger'd by the ſudden joy
Thy preſence wou'd inſpire. Convert the paſſion,
With which thou once addreſs'd her, to reſpect,
To friendſhip, and compaſſion: ere you meet her,
Abjure unlawful love at honour's ſhrine.
Conſider, ſhe is haughty Garcia's bride;
Reſpect her character.—You muſt not love her.

ALPHONSO.

Not love her? Oh Antonio! thou may'ſt tell
The winds to ceaſe, but will they be obedient?
Hence!

Hence! to the rocks and winds philoſophize,
I cannot bear it now. The fortunate
Can with a ſteady eye ſurvey the woes
That others muſt endure; they cooly reaſon,
And talk of patience, for they cannot feel
The agonies which rend my boſom. Oh!
Unkind Antonio, why wilt thou diſtreſs me,
Or talk of comfort to a man ſo wretched?
Yet am I not ſo loſt to honour's laws,
As to reject thy counſel. Fare thee well!
I to the houſe of Lopez ſhall return,
Nor here again will let my paſſion lead me,
Till thou, Antonio, ſhalt invite my ſteps. [*Exit.*

ANTONIO.

Unhappy friend! 'tis for thy good alone
That I have ſeem'd ſevere. My weaken'd ſoul
Catches the ſoft contagion of his ſadneſs,
And whilſt I blame him pity fills my breaſt.
To-morrow I will wait on Theodora;—
I long to ſee her, and with cautious love
Will tenderly impart to her thoſe tidings,
Replete with joy, amazement, and regret. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE V.—*The Saloon in* Benevares *Caſtle.*

Garcia *and* Theodora.

GARCIA.

This obſtinate diſdain, theſe ſullen looks,
Call for reſentment; yet my fooliſh heart
Abſolves thee from the fault.

THEODORA.

Alas! forgive me,
I cannot be an hypocrite, nor learn
To counterfeit thoſe looks that ſuit the happy
Unleſs I feel contented. If I was
To others gay, and only ſad with thee,
There might be reaſon, Garcia, for complaint;
But there is none can change my diſpoſition,
Or teach me cheerfulneſs.

Enter Inis.

INIS.

A cavalier
Is at the gate, and aſks to ſee my lady;
He ſays he comes to Theodora, charg'd
With tidings of Antonio.

THEODORA.

Of Antonio!
Oh moſt tranſporting news! Garcia, forgive me,
If this ſurprize occaſions me to take
My leave abruptly—I muſt be alone.
I wou'd compoſe myſelf before I ſee

This

This welcome meſſenger of dear Antonio:
Amazement, and a thouſand kindling thoughts,
Ruſh to my ſoul. [*Exit.*

GARCIA.

With wonder I perceive
She's not ſo loſt to happineſs as late
I fooliſhly believed. Tho' ſhe profeſs'd
Herſelf an alien unto joy, methinks
I read content and rapture in her eye.
Yes, Garcia! ſhe with ecſtaſy can meet
This man, whilſt all her ſighs, averſion, tears,
Contempt, and coldneſs, is reſerv'd for thee.
She loves Antonio—'tis beyond a doubt;
Relationſhip alone could never raiſe
So bright a bluſh on Theodora's cheek.——
It muſt be ſo. She named him as the perſon
Who wou'd redeem her father; love alone
Could urge her to ſuppoſe it. I will watch them;
My jealous ſoul for ever on th' alarm,
Is fired at once, and torture fills my breaſt. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—Theodora's *Apartment.*—*She is diſcovered ſitting by a Table*; Elvira *ſtanding at a little Diſtance.*

THEODORA.

I'm now compos'd, and equal to the meeting.
(*To* Elvira) Go and admit the ſtranger. [*Exit* Elvira.
(*riſing*) Now my heart
Forbear this idle flutt'ring; Garcia's honour,

My dignity requires that I ſhould ſeem
Far different from the thing I am .... Oh Heaven!

Enter Antonio.

It is Antonio!

ANTONIO.

Deareſt Theodora!

THEODORA. *(ſtarting back.)*

Approach not, ſtir not, for I am a wretch
Unfit for thy ſociety. Forbear
To gaze upon me; ſpeak not I entreat thee,
For thou muſt curſe me: yet if curſes kill,
Ah! pour them all on this devoted head. *(retiring.)*

ANTONIO.

Why doſt thou ſhun an ever faithful friend?
I love, eſteem, lament, and pity thee.

THEODORA.

Is't poſſible? Oh then I dare once more
Enfold thee to my boſom.—Dear Antonio!
(embraces him.)

ANTONIO.

I will not aſk thee any queſtions now,—
I will not dwell upon the fatal ſtory
That caus'd thy ruin.

THEODORA.

Oft haſt thou ſaid, *that* union of the ſoul,
That intercourſe which virtue keeps between us,
If thou ſhou'dſt err, and ſtray from honour's paths,
No longer can ſubſiſt. The time, alas!
The time Antonio, is arriv'd, when thou
Muſt ceaſe thy friendſhip for a hapleſs woman,
Who has no farther claim to thy eſteem,
And hardly dares pretend to thy compaſſion.

Oh!

Oh! I am fall'n indeed; my cruel fate
Betray'd me to the murderer of my father:
When thou ſhalt hear the ſad particulars
Of my unhappy hiſtory ....

ANTONIO.

Methinks
Alphonſo's ſhade will frown on rites like theſe,
And tell thee of thy violated vows.

THEODORA.

I know it well, and I deſerve his vengeance.
Yes, I am puniſh'd—for his gloomy ſhade
Already haunts me. Oh terrific viſion!
Methought laſt night I ſaw Alphonſo's ſpirit.

ANTONIO.

Have you forgot this taliſman? *(ſhewing her a ring.)*

THEODORA.

Oh Heaven!
'Twas what I gave Alphonſo as a charm,
A myſtic ſpell, to keep his life from danger:
Too well I know theſe characters. Ah! ſay,
How did you find it? where? who gave it you?
Inform me? ſpeak. Has then the ocean power
Thus to reſtore the reliques of the dead?,
Oh ſpeak!

ANTONIO.

In Tunis I obtain'd this ring
From generous Selim, in whoſe magazine
Jewels of various ſorts and value lay.

THEODORA.

How did he gain it?

ANTONIO.

'Twas preſented to him.

THEODORA.

By whom?

ANTONIO.

A friend that ſuffer'd ſhipwreck with him,
Who ſuccour'd by a veſſel bound for Britain,
Was in that veſſel afterwards attack'd
By corſairs, and enſlaved. Among the crew ....

THEODORA.

Fate give me power to hear the reſt. Atchieve
The ſtory—ſpeak. Alphonſo ſure is dead,
Or he had never parted with this gem;
Keep me not in ſuſpenſe.—Tell me, Antonio,
Where was he buried?

ANTONIO.

Wretched Theodora!
Prepare thyſelf for ſomething terrible,
Beyond what thou doſt yet imagine. Say,
Say, canſt thou wiſh this man ſo long lamented,
This much belov'd Alphonſo, was alive?
Shou'd he be living, wilt thou ſwear to fly
His dangerous preſence? .... (*pauſes.*)

THEODORA.

Speak, I charge thee ſpeak;
Unfold the myſtery.

ANTONIO. (*after a pauſe.*)

Alphonſo lives.

THEODORA.

Ye Gods, I thank you! (*faints.*)

ANTONIO. (*ſupporting* Theodora.)

Help! who waits? Oh Heaven!

Enter Elvira.

Her face is cover'd with a death-like paleneſs.

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.

Let me conjure you, Sir, to leave my lady;
Your preſence may increaſe her malady—
Don Garcia comes.

ANTONIO.

I wou'd avoid the monſter,
The cruel cauſe of all our miſeries,
Whoſe loath'd alliance with the houſe of Guzman
Muſt teach my honeſt cheek to bluſh with ſhame. [*Exit.*

Enter Don Garcia.

GARCIA.

Whence this alarm? (*aſide*) Perdition catch the author!

ELVIRA.

See ſhe revives! I pray you Sir, retire;
The joy that Don Antonio's preſence gave her
Has overcome her tender ſpirits.

GARCIA.

How!
Am I not then her huſband? 'tis my right
To ſhare her joys and griefs—I will not leave her.

THEODORA. (*reviving.*)

Oh ſtay Antonio! tell it me again;
Leave me not now, when moſt I want thy aid.

GARCIA.

Is not *my* aid ſufficient?

THEODORA.

Pardon me,
I ſaw you not—I was abſorb'd in joy
By Don Antonio's viſit.

GARCIA.

Yet I find,
At the firſt ſight of him you fainted not;
His words, it ſeems, have had this power to move you.
(*Aſide.*) But I had beſt diſſemble. Well, my love,
I wiſh this couſin may no more appear
To diſcompoſe you.

THEODORA. (*weeping.*)

Oh! you much miſtake;
Joy can affect the frame of feeble woman
The ſame as grief. Garcia, believe my words,
Antonio is moſt noble, excellent,
Valiant, and virtuous; from our infancy
Bred up together in my father's houſe,
We have eſteem'd each other; this regard
Explains the joy with which I have receiv'd him.
My lord, forgive me if I take my leave;
The ſudden preſence of a long-loſt friend
Has overcome my ſpirits; fare thee well.

[*Exit* Theodora *and* Elvira.

GARCIA. (*looking after her.*)

Away thou frail one! bear diſſembling tears,
And pois'nous ſighs to that black Stygian lake,
By whom falſe lovers ſwear their lying oaths.
Thoſe ſwimming eyes have loſt their charms for me;
Incontinence is written in their beams,
And tells me Theodora loves Antonio.
By yonder golden orb of day I ſwear
To be reveng'd . . . . (*ſtumbles againſt the magnet.*)
Hah! what is this?
A preſent ſurely from her paramour,
Which in her ſwooning ſhe has loſt; I'll keep it.

Enter

Enter Inis *looking on the Ground.*

GARCIA.

What doſt thou ſeek?

INIS.

My lady ſent me, Sir,
To ſeek a ring ſhe left upon the ground.

GARCIA.

A ring! ſhe had none.

INIS.

Yes indeed, my lord,
'Twas one ſhe values much; it was a gift
From a dear friend, ſhe ſays, who has from Spain
Been abſent many years.

GARCIA. (*aſide.*)

Deceitful woman!
How well this wife of mine can dare to lie,
And act the hypocrite. I too can play
With equal artifice. (*to her*) I have not ſeen it;
Commend me to the gentle Theodora.
May ſaints and angels guard her lovely form. [*Exit.*

Enter Elvira.

INIS.

I've ſought in vain, and cannot find the ring.
I fear my lady's troubled in her mind;
She ſtarts, ſhe weeps, ſhe knows not where to go;
Name but Antonio, and her cheek is fluſh'd
With crimſon bluſhes. Ever and anon
She breathes involuntary ſighs, and lifts
Her humid eyes to Heaven, then ſoars aloft,
Aſſumes herſelf, and looks like majeſty.

ELVIRA.

She wills that we retire. Go, gentle Inis,
I ſoon will follow thee. [*Exit* Inis.

(*A knocking is heard at the Door.*)

What noiſe is that?
Some new alarm, I doubt: who's there?

CARLOS.

'Tis Carlos. (Elvira *opens the door.*)
As Don Antonio turn'd him from the gate,
He bade me give this letter to my lady;
I charge you, good Elvira, bear it to her. [*Exit.*

ELVIRA.

What may this mean? Pray Heaven it may contain
Some conſolation for my wretched lady.——
Ill-fated Theodora! happier far
Thy lot had been if fortune had confin'd thee
Within an humble ſphere, for then perhaps
Succeſs had waited on thy artleſs love.
Firſt of the rural train, whene'er thy flocks
Had cropt the herbage upon Tagus' banks,
Each ſwain would have adored thy peerleſs charms,
And thou hadſt him preferr'd who pleas'd thee beſt;
But now thou art become a ſplendid bride,
Engag'd by fatal vows to one abhorr'd,
And the ſame rites which wedded thee to him,
Divorc'd thy heart from happineſs for ever.
Oh ye immortal ſaints! if power ye have
Peace to perturbed ſpirits to reſtore,
Aſſuage the pain that Theodora feels;
Pluck from her boſom ſorrow's deadly ſting,
And plunge it deep in the Lethean ſpring;
Remembrance of her former vows remove,
And cure the mourner of her hopeleſs love. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Garden.—Enter* Theodora *wildly, with the Letter in her Hand*; Elvira *following her.*

THEODORA.

ELVIRA, let us go.

ELVIRA.

Go! whither, madam?

THEODORA.

Oh! lead me to ſome quiet verdant bank
Which overlooks the ſilver ſtream, among
Whoſe ripling waves the water lily ſhews
Her purple leaves; where ruſhes love to grow,
And bow their ruſtling heads to Zephyr's wing;
There, like a willow rooted to the ground,
And ever bending o'er the murmuring brook,
I may increaſe the current with my tears;
Dimpling the ſurface by thoſe meſſengers
Of ſecret ſorrow, which in falling there,
Mix'd with the element whom beſt they love,
May find an everlaſting grave. Oh Heaven!
Why cannot I with equal eaſe arrive
At ſuch a peaceful period to my woes;
Caſt off a being irkſome to itſelf,
Invoke oblivion, and obtain repoſe?

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA.

For pity, deareſt madam! ceaſe this plaint.—
Willows will ſometimes ſhed their drooping leaves,
And ſo perhaps may'ſt thou caſt off the weight
Of grief that bows thee down. To other ſcenes
Than thoſe of ſolitary banks, and cold
Unpitying rivers, let us turn our thoughts.

THEODORA.

Or let us wander to ſome diſmal cell,
O'ergrown with brambles wild, and hoary moſs,
Where yew and melancholy cypreſs grow,
Suiting the gloomy temper of my mind:—
There ſhalt thou leave me, and the flitting bat,
The rook, the redbreaſt, and the ſolemn owl,
(Meet company for grief) ſhall be my gueſts,
There will I ſtay, until the northern blaſt
Howls mournful o'er the deſolated moor,
And winter's froſty fingers ſhall beſtrew
With icy particles each buſh and tree.
When nature ſeems to pauſe, and has exchang'd
Her verdant garments for a robe of ſnow,
Then if my wretched heart, benumb'd with cold,
Does not partake the faſhion of the times,
And grow as callous as the harden'd ground,
I will diſturb the ſilent atmoſphere,
And make the diſtant woods reverberate
With my ſhrill voice.—Yes! with my lateſt breath,
I will acquaint the foreſt with my woes,
And cry Alphonſo with ſo ſad a ſound,
That nature, melting at my miſery,
Shall thro' her various works be ſeen to ſhed

Tears

Tears ſympathetic, and relax the bonds
Of icy texture that enchain'd creation.

ELVIRA. (*aſide.*)

I muſt endeavour to direct her thoughts
Some other way than this; ſhe ſeems abſorb'd
In grief, and loſt to every other ſenſe.
(*To her.*) Madam, the taliſman . . . .

THEODORA.

Hah! haſt thou found it?

ELVIRA.

In vain we ſearch'd.

THEODORA.

No doubt Antonio knew
How dear that preſent of my early love
Was to Alphonſo. He did not deſign
For me to keep it, and return'd the gift
To him who was the owner. Oh this paper!
I wiſh I had not read it—the contents
Have harrow'd up my ſoul. (*puts it in her pocket.*)

ELVIRA.

And has Elvira
Contributed to Theodora's woes?
Alas! when Carlos to my hand entruſted
That fatal letter, I cou'd not believe
'Twas meant to aggravate thy ſharp afflictions.

THEODORA.

Thou generous maid! thy ſenſibility
Of my misfortunes claims my gratitude.
Born with a ſoul ſuperior to thy ſtation,
Thou art, as thou haſt ever been, my friend.

This

This letter tells me (what the taliſman
Which I have loſt was ſent to give me firſt
Suſpicion of) that my Alphonſo lives;
It paints his ſufferings, it records his ſtory.
I daily on my knees will thank thoſe powers
Which have preſerv'd him—that he is ſo near me
Is horror to my ſoul. I muſt not ſee him;
I will not, even at a diſtance, hear
The ſound of his lov'd voice. Yet not to ſee him
For a ſhort moment is a cruelty
I know not how to think on. Innocence
And virtue ſurely might allow one glimpſe,
One view of my Alphonſo, ere I die—
For die I muſt, and end this guilty love.
But ſee, Elvira, Garcia comes this way;
I dare not meet him—guiltleſs as I am
(Except in thought) I dread his piercing eye. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Garcia *and* Fernandez.

GARCIA.

She fears to meet me; guilt is in her face.
Oh conſcience, conſcience! Now I find Fernandez,
I can deteſt this woman.

FERNANDEZ.

Yet, my lord,
Can you reſiſt ſuch gentleneſs and beauty?

GARCIA.

Beauty! what's that? the maſk that ſmiles to cheat.
If angel virtue rules ſupreme within
Beauty is exquiſitely good and pleaſing;
But ah! if folly, falſehood, deviliſh cunning,

And

And all the arts ſo many women practiſe,
Are hid beneath the guiſe of innocence . . . .
No more: my purpoſe is as fix'd as fate;
I am a huſband and a Spaniard.—Pride,
Suſpicion, jealouſy, and rage, demand
Thoſe ſacrifices due to my revenge.

FERNANDEZ.

You will not kill her on ſuſpicion?

GARCIA.

Ceaſe
Fernandez, to inveſtigate the thoughts
That influence my ſoul; bring Inis hither. [*Exit* Fernandez.
When opportunity preſents itſelf,
The hypocrite, who wears the ſpecious maſk
Of virtue, bids adieu to artifice.
I will prepare a trap for Theodora,
A bait for her diſcretion; I will be
A ſecret witneſs to her conduct. Whilſt
She thinks me abſent, I will watch her ſteps,
And, if I find her guilty, be reveng'd.

Enter Inis *and* Fernandez.

Inis, inform your lady I've receiv'd
Letters this morning from Madrid, which tell me
My uncle Bertram, on the bed of ſickneſs,
Requeſts my preſence; it is meet I go
With ſpeed, and therefore will not aſk to ſee
My Theodora, leſt in converſation
I ſhou'd forget my uncle's urgent claim,
And waſte the minutes, which I ill can ſpare,
In long adieus and tender exhortations,

Concerning

Concerning Theodora's valued health.
Bid her to reſt aſſur'd of my affection;
In three days time ſhe may expect me home.

[*Exit with* Fernandez.

INIS.

Yes I will tell her. Abſence wears a charm
When it extends to thee: thy ſoul feroce
Knows not the gentle virtues that adorn
Thy lovely bride. No uniſon of temper
Attaches thee to her—no ſentiment
Of honour bids thee to revere her worth:
Thy heart is ſelfiſh, arrogant, and vain;
Pomp is thy idol—tyranny thy joy. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment.*—Theodora *ſola, ſitting at a Table, looking on the Letter.*

THEODORA.

Oh my unhappy, loſt, ador'd Alphonſo!
Great have thy ſufferings been, but mine, I feel
Muſt far ſurpaſs them. It is time to die;
The arrows of misfortune now are ſpent——
I will accelerate the hour of death,
And from the Parcæ wreſt that feeble thread
Which they have wove for miſery alone.

(*Riſing.*) Yes, Guzman, I will ſoon rejoin thy ſhade;
I will not live till Garcia is return'd.——
I'm told there is an herb, whoſe juice compreſs'd
Into a little draught, has power to ſend
The ſoul from its impriſonment. It grows
In plenty, mingled with the common graſs,
Upon the verge of Arethuſa's fountain.
Oh Spain! not all thy banks of aſphodel,
Thy orange bloſſoms, or thy citron groves,
Are half ſo grateful to my ſoul, as that
Which offers an oblivion to my woes.
Give me not what is pleaſant or refreſhing,
I want an antidote againſt reflection,
A deadly potion, to extinguiſh ſenſe.——
(*Kneels.*) Ye ſacred Powers! if yet a wretch, profan'd
With thoughts abhorrent to religious minds,
(Excus'd alone by dire neceſſity)
May dare with ſupplicating hands to ſue
For mercy from the judgment ſeat above,
Oh! let me pray ye to forgive my crime.
I am leſs guilty than unfortunate;
I cannot live—I do not fear to die——
Ah then, in pity to a wretch like me,
Prevent my hand the deed of ſuicide,
And waft my ſpirit to the realms of bliſs.——
(*Riſes.*) But can I leave the world, and not behold
My dear Alphonſo? (Agonizing thought!)
Perhaps he does not know I was compell'd
By my misfortunes, to eſpouſe Don Garcia.
He may believe I unreluctant yielded.
I cannot die and leave him thus deceiv'd.
Cold rigid honour, prudence may condemn me,
But conſcious of my innocence, I dare

(Ev'n

(Ev'n on the verge of fate) behold Alphonſo—
Yes, I will vindicate myſelf; I'll ſee him,
Obtain his pity, and contented die. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*An Anti-chamber.*—Don Garcia *comes out of a Cloſet.*

GARCIA.

All yet is ſilent—ſo far it is well.——
Oh jealouſy! thou monſter of the mind,
Bred by diſtruſt, altho' allied to love,
Thou doſt infuſe thy venom in the cup,
Whoſe beverage was deſign'd for happineſs.
It turns the ſweet to bitter, keeps repoſe
From viſiting my bed, and follows me
Where'er I rove.—To doubt is to be wretched,
At leaſt I find it ſo. My pride, alarm'd,
Stifles the murmurs of expiring love;
Yet there are moments when I would believe
My wife is innocent. I think her chaſte;
I hope her ſorrows ſpring from filial fondneſs.
My doating ſoul rejects each black ſuſpicion,
And longs to make conciliatory terms
With her, who but the very hour before
I ſecretly condemn'd, and ſwore to hate.
She may be virtuous—if I find ſhe ſtays
Contented and retired within the caſtle,
In ſolitary ſadneſs, till the time

Propos'd

Propos'd for my return, I'll never more
Dare to ſuſpect her.

(Elvira *comes out of* Theodora's *Room with a ſmall Wax-taper in her hand, and croſſes the Stage.*—Garcia *hides himſelf.*—*She opens a Door ſoftly, and calls.*)

ELVIRA.

Carlos!—he hears me not, I'll call again—
Carlos!

CARLOS. (*within.*)

Who calls? moleſting me at hours
Devoted unto prayer and contemplation.
Who calls?

ELVIRA.

Come forth, it is Elvira calls thee.

(Carlos *enters the Room.*)

ELVIRA.

At the firſt dawn of day prepare thyſelf
To be ambaſſador for Theodora:
Our lady bids thee, as the laſt requeſt
She e'er will make thee, go unto the cottage
Where Don Antonio tarries; tell him thus:
"If he whom Theodora once has lov'd,
Will at the hour of nine to-morrow eve
Preſent himſelf at Arethuſa's fountain,
Within the precincts of Don Garcia's garden,
He there will meet the hapleſs Theodora."—
Farewell! the time allows not more diſcourſe;
Be ſure, the motive of our wretched lady
Is honourable; in her truth confide;
Be prudent, vigilant, and expeditious.

CARLOS.

Whatever ſhe commands I will obey.

[*Exeunt different ways.*

GARCIA.

Oh ſorcereſs! moſt vile deſigning woman!
Tis now too plain; I want no further proof.
She never wou'd appoint Antonio thus,
Whom ſhe might openly receive, unleſs
Her guilty ſoul was fearful of ſuſpicion,
Becauſe ſhe knew her actions wou'd deſerve it.
I will diſpatch this hoary-headed pander,
This miniſter of wickedneſs .... Yet hold!
I muſt have richer vengeance: yes, her minion,
His life ſhall pay the forfeit of her crimes.
In vain may ſhe expect to meet her lover;
I will prevent the interview. Revenge,
Henceforward thou ſhalt be my guide; I ſee
Thy flaming banner fluttering in the air,
And ready for deſtructive deeds: I catch
The fierce contagion, and enliſt myſelf
Beneath thy ſtandard: (*muſes*)
Yes, it muſt be ſo.
Hence will I ſteal, in ſearch of my Fernandez;
Devoted to my will, he ſhall aſſiſt
My enterprize, and if my arm ſhou'd fail
Will ſecond the deſign. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.—*A Grove by the Cottage.*

Antonio *and* Carlos.

ANTONIO.

In truth, good Carlos, I am much diſtreſs'd:
I think my couſin doth forget herſelf,
In thus ſoliciting the company
Of him ſhe ought to ſhun; tis dang'rous pleaſure,
Tis falſe indulgence, and will aggravate
Th' enſuing pangs of abſence. Providence
Ordains this interview ſhou'd not be granted.
Two days are paſs'd ſince I have been bereav'd
Of my friend's preſence; he, by ſtealth has left me,
And fled I know not whither. Every grove
Have I inſpected, ſtrict enquiry made
Concerning him, but all in vain. Ere this
I to Madrid had gone, if my Alphonſo
Could have been made partaker of my journey.
My boding mind ſuggeſts a thouſand ills,
But moſt I fear that he exiſts no more:
I fear he has been led by wild deſpair
To be himſelf the miniſter of death.

CARLOS.

Alas! who ſhall to Theodora tell
Theſe woeful tidings? poor unhappy lady!
I grieve to ſee her waſting with her cares,
And bending tow'rds an early grave: her cheek
(Where blooming beauty dwelt) is now grown pale;
She languiſhes and ſickens like a deer
That bears the fatal arrow in its ſide,
Turns to ſome covert, weeps, and ſlowly dies.
Oh! I have borne her often in my arms,

When playful innocence inſpir'd her actions,
When her ſerene and ductile mind receiv'd
Impreſſions only of the ſofteſt virtues.—
Goodneſs her aim, benevolence her taſk;
She knew not love, ſhe ſcarcely heard of care.
And have I liv'd to ſee this bitter change?
Would I had died before my good old maſter. (*weeps.*)

ANTONIO.

Thou virtuous man! Antonio ſhall impart
Some comforts yet to crown thy latter days:
Long as I live thou haſt a friend; forbear,
I charge thee, to inform the lovely mourner
Of her Alphonſo's abſence. I will meet her—
Let her expect her lover. I muſt try
With gentleneſs of ſpeech, by ſlow degrees,
To ſpeak the doubtful fate of him ſhe ſeeks.

CARLOS.

Yet, deareſt Sir, permit thy faithful ſervant
To wait upon thee to this interview;
Excuſe my caution; it proceeds from zeal
To ſerve the heir of Guzman's family,
The repreſentative of all their virtues.
I know each avenue, each ſecret walk
Within the garden; if ſome accident
Or interruption ſhou'd enſue, my care
Shall by another way conduct you forth.
Tho' Garcia's abſence favours your deſign,
Yet he may have ſome pryings friends abroad
To watch the motions of his lady.

ANTONIO.

Well,
I do accept thy offer. Tell my couſin
Her friend ſhall meet her at th' appointed hour,
And then repair to me with diligence. [*Exeunt ſeparately.*

SCENE

SCENE V.—*An Apartment.*—Theodora *and* Elvira.

ELVIRA.

Beneath the weſtern hemiſphere the ſun
Declines apace; th' appointed hour is near,
Yet art thou calm?—Oh Theodora! ſay,
Do not thy ſpirits hurry to thy heart,
And raiſe a tumult there?

THEODORA.

Elvira . . . . No!
Aſſur'd of innocence, I have compos'd
Myſelf to act the part I have aſſign'd,
Without thoſe agonies, thoſe ſtrong emotions,
Which thou doſt apprehend. There was a time
When, if I heard the name of my Alphonſo,
The ſtartled blood, quick mantling in my cheek,
Spoke conſcious love; when, if I heard his voice,
My beating heart confeſs'd its happineſs.——
But now 'tis ſhame, 'tis guilt, to own the joy
That I ſhall prove in ſeeing him. The laws
Of honour muſt forbid to Garcia's wife
Acknowledgments of love which might become
Don Guzman's daughter—I will meet Alphonſo,
As dying martyrs gaze with ſpeechleſs rapture
Upon thoſe ſaints for whom they ſuffer death. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*The Garden by Moonlight.* Benevares *Caſtle ſeen at a diſtance.*

Garcia *and* Fernandez *maſk'd.*

GARCIA.

Yes, by my will I have precluded her,
In caſe I fall in this my enterprize,
From ever marrying with accurs'd Antonio;
Which if ſhe does, ſhe forfeits the eſtate
I otherwiſe bequeath her. Oh Fernandez!
I die, I languiſh, till the hour arrives
When I may gratify my rage. I pant
With eager expectation to behold
The fond deluded fair lament her love,
Bewail herſelf, and with diſtracted looks
Rend the bright honours of her head, arraign
The cruel Gods, and be at length compell'd
To aſk for life, from him who ſlew Antonio.

FERNANDEZ.

You will not kill him baſely?

GARCIA.

My reſentments
Are ſuch, as claim the utmoſt I can do
To rid me of a rival; yet I take
My chance Fernandez. He perhaps is arm'd,
And if he yields not to the firſt ſurprize,
With valour may reſiſt me. Shou'd I fall,
Thy arm muſt then accompliſh my deſign,
That dying, I may have the conſolation

To know that Theodora will not triumph.
Attend me to the eaſtern gate; we there
In ambuſh muſt remain till he arrives.
Ride Hecate ſwiftly, on the clouds of night;
Oh come with ſpeed, and Garcia's cauſe befriend,
For by the ſilver lamp above, *(pointing to the Moon.)*
I vow,
To Benevares I will ne'er return,
Till I'm reveng'd, or number'd with the dead.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*A Grove by Moonlight.—The Fountain of Arethuſa.*

Theodora *veil'd, and* Elvira.

THEODORA.

Lie ſtill, my fluttering heart. I muſt be calm,
And learn to counterfeit tranquillity.
Oh my Alphonſo! ere I ſleep for ever,
I ſhall behold thee; it will be the means
To bleſs the little ſpace of time I grant
For longer life. Don Garcia's abſence ſeem'd
Deſign'd by fate to favour Theodora
In this laſt interview. This is the ſpot
I have ſelected for the theatre
Where my concluſive ſcene of life muſt cloſe.—
Pure fountain, from thy banks I ſhall derive
A ſovereign medicine to extirpate grief.
I wonder my Alphonſo comes not. Hah!
Perhaps ſome accident . . . .

ELVIRA.

Forbid it Heaven!
Yet my preſaging mind .... Ah Theodora!
I counſel'd thee againſt this interview.

THEODORA.

I tremble with my fears.

ELVIRA.

'Tis paſt the hour:
A lover's ſpeed wou'd ſure have brought him here
Before the time, if ....

THEODORA.

Oh Elvira! go,
Approach the eaſtern gate; tis there Alphonſo
Muſt gain admittance; ſee if he appears. [*Exit* Elvira.
(*After a pauſe.*) What ſilence reigns around; I freeze with fear.
Methinks the moon and ſtars turn wond'rous pale,
And miſty vapours from the earth aſcend:
My courage fails; I wou'd I were at home.
A ſudden terror ſpreads throughout my frame,
And like a conſcious wretch who fears detection,
I ſee an enemy in every tree—
I hear reproofs in every breath of air.
What if the ſhade of Guzman ſhou'd ariſe,
And blame me for this aſſignation; frown
Upon his hapleſs child (altho' the ſource
Of all her woes was filial piety,)
And gazing on me, ſhake his ſilver locks,
Till my brain turns, and I grow wild with horror.—
Yet Guzman was affectionate and juſt;
If he can ſee my heart, he will acquit me,
Shield me from danger in this hour of trial,
And bleſs the daughter he was wont to love.—
Elvira comes not! .... where is my Alphonſo?

Immortal

Immortal Powers! I cannot long endure
This horrible ſuſpenſe—I'm faint with fear.
(leans againſt a tree.)

Enter Elvira *haſtily.*

ELVIRA.

Oh madam, fly! ſome demon of revenge
Is buſy in deſtruction's cauſe . . . . alas!
As I approach'd the gate, I heard the ſound
Of claſhing arms: I haſten'd to the ſpot,
And with my cries implor'd the combatants
Yet to deſiſt. Antonio was amongſt them,
And Carlos. In the faces of the reſt
My haſty judgment cou'd not trace the features
Of any perſon I had ſeen before:
One of them fell, who ſeeing me arrive,
Gave me this paper.
(Theodora *opens it, and finds the taliſman.*)

THEODORA.

Hah! . . . . it is enough;
'Twas meant for me.—Alphonſo oft has ſworn,
In death alone he wou'd reſign this ring.——
I have beguil'd him to his ruin, caus'd
An ignominious death to him I loved.
He ſends me *this*, to prove he has obey'd me,
And to accuſe me of betraying him.—
I dare not fly unto this ſcene of death.
Where ſhall I turn? where hide myſelf? Oh go,
My dear Elvira, to the fatal ſpot,
See that the body homeward be convey'd.
Garcia (tyrannic as he is) can ne'er
Refuſe him burial. 'Tis the laſt requeſt
I have to make him.—If he doubts my honour,

Do

Do you atteſt it. Hence! and bring me tidings.
Yet what have I to learn?— [*Exit* Elvira.
I now will try
T'elude her vigilance; quick for a thought
That ſuits my loſt condition!—Yes, I'll go,
And from the northern rock precipitate
My wretched body to the waves below,
Engulph'd among whoſe ſurges I may lie,
And undiſcover'd find a watry grave.—
I come, Alphonſo! ſtay beloved ſhade,
I will attend thee to the realms above. (*runs off.*)

SCENE VIII.—*A Ridge of Rocks; one of them looks hollow like a Cavern, the next to it ſeems to project over the Ocean.*

Enter Theodora *haſtily.—Goes towards the Rocks—ſtops.*

THEODORA.

Hark! how the billowy ſurge comes ruſhing on
With violence, againſt the craggy rock
Daſhing itſelf into a thouſand atoms.
The ſhrieking curlew courts me to the waves,
Whilſt the grey gull and greedy cormorant
Sit on the pointed ſummits of the rocks,
Prepared to make a banquet on my corpſe.—
Hah! on the winged clouds methinks I ſee
A beckoning ſhade that o'er the ocean flies.
It is Alphonſo—I obey the call. (*runs to the rock.*)
(*A Hermit ruſhes out of the Cave, and ſtops her.*)

HERMIT.

HERMIT.

What means thy frantic fury?

THEODORA.

Impious man!
Tis guilt to ſtop me, when my lover calls.—
I will not, cannot be arreſted thus.
I ſhall not overtake him—ſtay Alphonſo!
(*To him*) Whoe'er thou art, I do entreat thee leave me.
Away! and let me paſs. (*endeavouring to get from him.*)

HERMIT.

Beware, raſh woman!
Upon perdition's verge you ſtand, and claim
The hand of pity to prevent your crime.
Oh! be not led to ruin by deſpair.
Heaven can give comfort in its own good time,
And views with merciful compaſſion thoſe
Who ſilently, with mournful patience, wait,
Depending on aſſiſtance from above,
And meekly yielding to the will of fate,
Whatever it may be; but unto thoſe
Who caſt aſide reliance on their God,
And dare commit the crime of ſuicide,
Thoſe heavenly portals are for ever ſhut
Which open to receive the juſt and good;
Where ſuffering virtue meets with its reward,
Where joy reſides, and ſorrow cannot come.

THEODORA.

And who art thou that thus arraigns my conduct?

HERMIT.

One who has been familiar with misfortune;
A man ſelf-baniſh'd from ſociety,
The victim of a diſappointed love;

Yet

Yet wretched as I am, I dare to live,
And will be guiltleſs, tho' unfortunate.

THEODORA.

Ah! thou haſt never lov'd as I have done,
Nor known the miſeries that I have borne;
Thy love, tho' abſent, may exiſt .... but mine ....

HERMIT.

What if I ſhou'd reſtore thee to thy love?

THEODORA.

Vain man, impoſſible! his doom is ſeal'd,
Impoſtor hence! and ſport not with my griefs,
I never can behold Alphonſo more,
And therefore wiſh to cloſe my weary eyes,
Since there is nothing left upon the globe
I can endure to ſee.

HERMIT.

Alphonſo lives.

THEODORA.

Art thou a prophet? doſt thou know his fate?
Oh tell me quickly! haſt thou ever ſeen him?
Alas! I rave; it is impoſſible
That thou ſhou'dſt know him, ſtill leſs poſſible
To raiſe him from the dead.

HERMIT.

Oh Theodora!
With Heav'n all things are poſſible.

THEODORA.

Who *art* thou?

HERMIT.

Doſt thou not know me?

THEODORA.

No, I know thee not.

HERMIT.

HERMIT.

Haſt thou forgotten me?

THEODORA.

Methinks I know
Thy voice.

HERMIT.

Thou dear, thou ever faithful woman!
Behold Alphonſo!
(*Diſcovering himſelf by throwing off the Hermit's dreſs.*)
(Theodora *ſhrieks and falls on the ground.*)

ALPHONSO. (*kneeling by her.*)

I have been too ſudden.—
The ſtrange ſurpriſe ſubdues her gentle ſpirits.
My long-loſt love! my Theodora! riſe,
Look up once more, and bleſs me with a ſmile.—
It is Alphonſo calls .... compoſe thyſelf,
Speak to me once again.

THEODORA. (*half riſing, and looking wildly.*)

Ah! let me go.—
Where am I? do I yet exiſt? Forbear!
I'll ſleep again, and dream of my Alphonſo.
Hold, cruel Garcia, do not raiſe me up;
This earth ſhall be my pillow .... who art thou?
Oh joy! amazement! rapture! tis himſelf; (*riſes.*)
It is indeed Alphonſo! Do I live?
May I believe my eyes? Ah ſpeak again.

ALPHONSO.

Yes, deareſt Theodora! Fate allows
This tranſient reſpite to our mutual ſufferings.
Behold Alphonſo, ſent by Providence
To ſuccour thee, to ſnatch thee from deſpair.

THEODORA.

THEODORA.

I fain wou'd ſpeak, but joy reſtrains my tongue. (*weeps.*)

ALPHONSO.

I had reſolv'd to dedicate my life,
(A life grown uſeleſs ſince depriv'd of thee)
To ſolitude and prayer. I choſe this ſpot,
Uncouth and melancholy, (only fit
For wretches ſuch as me) to hide my griefs;
From whence I had the pleaſure to ſurvey,
Tho' at a diſtance, thoſe majeſtic towers,
Beneath whoſe ſhade my Theodora dwelt.
I never thought to trouble thy repoſe,
Nor even let Antonio know my fate.

THEODORA.

Antonio! Hah! that name revives my fears.

ALPHONSO.

What doſt thou mean? Don Garcia, where is he?

THEODORA.

Gone to Madrid .... but oh! Antonio! ....

ALPHONSO.

Heavens!
What doſt thou mean?—Some new misfortune threatens.

THEODORA.

I ſent to meet thee in the garden; there
Elvira brought me tidings, which convinc'd me
Some ruffians at the gate ſurpriz'd and ſlew thee.
Antonio was amid the fray.

ALPHONSO.

Oh horror!
Perhaps for me my faithful friend expires.

THEODORA.

Antonio was victorious; one unknown
Was ſlain, who ſent this taliſman to me,
By which I augur'd that Alphonſo died.

ALPHONSO.

I hear the ſound of feet; it comes this way;
The myſtery will be unravel'd.

THEODORA.

Lo!

Elvira comes.

Enter Elvira.

ELVIRA.

I am rejoic'd to find thee.
Throughout the garden with anxiety
I've ſought, and fear'd ſome fatal accident . . .

THEODORA.

Oh my Elvira! kind and faithful friend,
Partake the joy which I this moment prove.—
Behold Alphonſo!

ELVIRA.

Wonder working Heaven!
Some angel ſurely has this day been preſent,
To rule the ſtrange events by which your ſufferings
Will recompenced be.

ALPHONSO.

Where is Antonio?

ELVIRA.

He lives, and only for thy abſence mourns.
Garcia . . . .

THEODORA.

Immortal Powers! is he return'd?

ELVIRA.

Altho' his laſt diſhonourable act
Exceeds the former vices of his life,
Yet, Theodora, will thy gentle ſoul
Pardon a man whoſe wicked reign is o'er.—
His crimes ſhou'd with their author be forgotten,
And buried with him in the ſilent grave.

THEODORA.

What new ſurprize is this? Don Garcia! . . . How
Return'd? . . . . Don Garcia dead?

ALPHONSO.

Can this be true?

ELVIRA.

The tyrant pays the forfeit of his crimes.
Jealous of Don Antonio, he reſolv'd,
Baſely reſolv'd, to meet him at the gate;
Having o'erheard the meſſage ſent by Carlos,
He purpos'd to aſſaſſinate thy friend,
And made Fernandez partner of his plot.
Diſguis'd with vizors, they in ambuſh lay;
But Heaven decreed the miſchief he deſign'd
For others, ſhou'd recoil upon himſelf.
Carlos, the faithful Carlos! had attended
Antonio to the eaſtern gate, which led
To Arethuſa's fountain. Good old man!
With reſolute and vigorous exertion,
Soon as he ſaw Antonio was beſet,
He fought in his defence; and at the moment
When he diſarmed Fernandez, victory
Sat on the ſword of juſtice—Garcia fell
Mortally wounded by the brave Antonio.
In his laſt moments he confeſs'd his crimes,
And ſaid he gave the taliſman to me,
In hopes that Theodora wou'd imagine

It

It came from Don Antonio (whom he knew not
That I had ever ſeen;) her ſharp deſpair
He thought wou'd cauſe her to devote herſelf
To inſtant death. His favourite, Fernandez,
He ſwore was adverſe to the ſcheme, and pray'd
That mercy might be ſhewn him. By his Will,
(Within theſe twelve hours made whilſt he has been
Conceal'd within the caſtle) it appears
His dying words were true; for there we find
That Garcia's jealouſy was only pointed
At Don Antonio.

ALPHONSO.

Moſt amazing news!

THEODORA.

Alphonſo, I confeſs I have deſerv'd
A different fate, ſince I have dared diſtruſt
The power of Providence, and ſuffer'd grief
To ſtifle reaſon, and provoke deſpair.

ALPHONSO.

Oh Theodora! we may yet be happy.
In one ſhort hour, behold our proſpects change;
The ſullen gloom created by deſpondence
Retires, and cheerful as the dawn of day
Celeſtial Hope expands her ſilver wings.
When leaſt expected, fate aſſiſtance lent,
Thy death, and Garcia's purpoſe, to prevent;
Which proves however keen our ſufferings are,
We all ſhou'd ſtrive to guard againſt deſpair.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ELVIRA.

'TIS ſtrange a Lady, beautiful and young,
Shou'd for an abſent lover mourn ſo long,
Preferring melancholy cypreſs ſhades
To brilliant ſhows, and evening ſerenades;
And ſtill more ſtrange, the poor inſipid fool
To GARCIA's courtſhip ſhould appear ſo cool.
Then old DON GUZMAN, (who 'tis ſtated, died
From an exceſs of honourable pride,)
His character 's abſurd, in times like theſe,
When men on any terms would purchaſe eaſe,
And think it is no crime to ſell a daughter,
If ſhe her arms with quality may quarter.
Convenience, fortune, and a parent's voice,
Theſe are the things that rule the bridal choice.
The paſſive lady, and her wealthy ſpouſe,
Mechanically ſpeak by rote their vows,
And at the altar make their joint profeſſions,
As calmly as a judge begins the ſeſſions.——
While there are baits for vanity and pride,
The man of Riches cannot want a bride;
When pomp and conſequence may be her lot,
His vices, if they 're known, muſt be forgot.
She thinks his wealth for this, will make amends,
And the gay world ſupply the loſs of friends.

They wed—but diſappointment ſoon appears;
No converſe ſooths,—no confidence endears,
Each rue the day when they reſolv'd to wed,
Each go their different way, by faſhion led.
Tho' ſhe may be a vixen, he a brute,
They will not take the trouble to diſpute,
For in this modiſh maxim they agree,
To be from care, ennui, and trouble free,
To ſhew the world how ſplendidly they live,
Nor one ſhort hour to calm reflection give.

Yet there are ſome, ev'n in an age like this,
Who think reciprocal affection bliſs,
Whoſe hearts with every moral virtue glow,
Who no divided intereſts can know,
And whoſe example to the world affords
A leſſon, which the muſe with joy records.

This picture ſurely cannot be unknown!—
Behold the original on BRITAIN's throne.

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